

THE CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY TEENAGE MOTHERS IN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS: THE CASE OF HLANGANANI SOUTH CIRCUIT

by

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Dissertation

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in

CURRICULUM STUDIES

in the

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

(School of Education)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

SUPERVISOR: Prof. MJ Themane

02 MAY 2013

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study was conducted to explore the challenges experienced by teenage mothers in Hlanganani South Circuit Secondary Schools in the Vhembe District in Limpopo, South Africa. Hlanganani South circuit is made up of seven secondary schools and out of these seven three were sampled because of their vicinity and the high number of teenage mothers in them. A purposive sample was conducted wherein twelve teenage mothers aged between twelve to eighteen years, three educators and three School Management Team members from these secondary schools were sampled to explore the challenges that teenage mothers come across in these schools. Data were collected using two methods, namely: semi structured interview and documents analysis. Semi structured interviews were used to gather information from both teenage mothers and educators while documents such as period registers, attendance registers, morning study registers, permission register, winter enrichment programme registers, afternoon study register, quarterly schedules and continuous assessment tasks were used to explore the challenges faced by teenage mothers in secondary schools. Data from semi structured interview with teenage mothers were analysed and the following themes and categories emerged: difficulty in balancing schooling and motherhood, negative attitude by educators towards teenage mothers, negative attitude of peers, lack of extra lessons/catch up programmes for teenage mothers, lack of optional tasks/tests for teenage mothers, lack of counselling and support for teenage mothers, and lack of structures for teenage mothers. On analysing data from educators, the following categories emerged: lack of cooperation from teenage mothers, lack of commitment by teenage mothers on academic matters, poor school attendance, lack of time for extra lessons, and lack of time for optional tasks/tests. The analysis of data from documents indicated habitual absenteeism, dodging of lessons (morning and afternoon), missing tasks and poor performance by teenage mothers. The key findings of the transcribed interviews indicated that teenage mothers had difficulty in balancing schooling and taking care of their children, because they lacked support from their educators, peers, parents and the community at large. In order for teenage mothers to succeed with their schooling, maximum support is needed from all stake holders, that is peers, parents, educators and the whole community structures.

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation is hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree of Master of Education in Curriculum Studies has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other University; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

CHAUKE, H (Mrs)

02/05/2013

DATE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful to the principals of the three schools from which respondents for this study were drawn; if they denied me access to the school premises the study would have been a nightmare. I also want to thank the welfare committees in these schools, who helped me to identify teenage mothers in their schools. My special thanks go to my respondents, the educators and teenage mothers, who poured their hearts out to me to make this study a success.

The immeasurable support and guidance received from my supervisor, Prof. M.J Themane, cannot be brushed aside. The patience and encouragement from him took me from one level to another, helping me to believe in my potential. I then knew that I could do all things through Christ, who strengthens me. Thanks a lot Prof. for fitting me into your busy schedule.

I also acknowledge the help and support of Mrs Nkuna Venus, who tirelessly showed me how to access information from the internet; Dr Hlengani Seth Baloyi, and Muzila T.W, who taught me a lot about research, you really made a difference in my life. My adorable sister Manyusa Gladys, how can I forget the love and inspiration you have shown during the time of this project? May God grant you more days!

How can I forget the good work done by Johanna Sammons, my editor who fitted me into his hectic schedule to make this study a success.

I am very honoured by the support I got from my children, Xongile, Xiluva and Xikombelo. For the past two years you have been without a mother, because my attention was focused on this study, but you pulled through.

Finally, I am very grateful to my loving husband Mkhachani Joseph, for the love and support he has shown to our children when I was busy juggling household duties and my studies. The sacrifices you made to make this study a success deserve an applause. I really appreciate the way you support me in all spheres of my life, 'You are one in a million!'

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved parents Makhubele Makhosana Joseph and Ndaheni, for bringing me into this world and guiding me with the help of God, and to my husband Mkhachani Joseph Chauke for his undying support in my studies.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFDC	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CASS	Continuous Assessment Task
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HSRC	Human Science Research Council
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
LO	Life Orientation
RCL	Representative Council of Learners
SA	South Africa
SASA	South African School Act
SLES	Specialised Learner and Educator Support
SMT	School Management Team
TOP	Termination of Pregnancy
UK	United Kingdom
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US	United States
USA	United States of America
WCED	Western Cape Education Department
WHO	World Health Organisation

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The motivation for this study arose from the personal observation the researcher made among teenage mothers at Hlanganani South Circuit. Team teaching approach was introduced in Hlanganani south circuit wherein educators used to make turns of teaching in different schools on subject of their specialization. It was observed during that period that most learners were not in class and those who were present during lessons did not turn up on pre-arranged days to write tests for those sections taught. On inquiry, the researcher also found out that most of those absent were teenage mothers. The researcher's school was no exception to this problem, and was prompted to investigate the matter further in order to find out the challenges teenage mothers face as they go back to schools. In addition, it is also supported by various researchers, who studied topics related about teenage mothers.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Teenage pregnancy, resulting under normal circumstances into teenage motherhood is and has been a social and health problem in many industrialised countries; this is an issue that needs to be addressed (Shaw, Lawlor & Najman, 2006). According to Vinnerjung, Franzen and Danielsson (2007) the United States of America (USA) has the highest teenage birth rate per 1000 women (52,1%) aged between 15-19 years, when compared to other developed countries, followed by the United Kingdom in Europe (30,8%), Canada (20,2%) and Australia (18,4%). In many social democratic countries an increase in teenage motherhood has been found to be associated with the existence of an elaborated welfare system, for example, in the USA, it has been reported that approximately one-half of teenage mothers go on welfare within one year of birth and 77% within five years of birth (Makiwane, Desmond, Ritcher & Udjo, 2006). According to Carter and Spear (2002), teenage motherhood continues to be a community health problem warranting attention, especially in the rural areas of southern USA.

Welfare systems are thought by some to have a perverse incentive for teenagers, because they receive financial support when they bear children. Countries like the USA and Britain have seen the problem and withdrew the grant from teenage mothers (Makiwane et al, 2006).

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2011), figures reflected that the global average number of births per every 1000 girls in the 15-19 age groups is 65. Asia has 56 per 1000 girls in the same age group and this statistic rises to 70 per 1000 girls in Thailand. According to the Health and Demographic Survey (1992) in Nigeria 47% of women aged 20-24 were married before the age of 15 and 87% married before 18. According to Save a Child Report (2006) more than one in six teenage girls between the ages of 15-19 gave birth in Niger, Liberia and Mali. Makiwane et al (2006), allude that in South Africa teenage motherhood is relatively high. About half of all young females from 15 years of age are mothers.

The high rate of teenage motherhood as reflected by the Department of Health Survey (1998) is a clear indication that South African teenagers engage themselves in unprotected sex despite the high spreading of the HIV and AIDS. They risk their lives by falling pregnant and become mothers, because they want to prove their womanhood in the society (Preston - Whyte, 1991). Teenage motherhood is no longer unintended and unplanned (Magwetshu, 1990), but a purposeful act. Ritcher and Mlambo (2005) confirm that teenage motherhood is intentional, the greater the positive consequences of motherhood to a teenager, the less likely that they will engage in protective sexual activity. The desire to become mothers is due to the fact that teenagers see motherhood as a positive choice and a way to a more adult role (Bryant, 2006).

The problem of teenage motherhood has been studied by different researchers, who attempted to look at the causes of teenage pregnancy and teenage motherhood (Preston-Whyte, 1991, Hopane, 2008; & Makoko, 2008) and strategies as well as programmes to prevent teenage pregnancy and teenage motherhood thereof (Frost, Jennifer, Forrest & Darroch, 1995; Manamela, 1994), however little is known about challenges experienced by teenage mothers in secondary schools. This study seeks or attempts to explore the challenges that teenage mothers experience in Hlanganani South Circuit secondary schools of the Vhembe District of Limpopo.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Many teenage girls, who become mothers in their secondary school years, have many challenges ahead of them. The greatest challenge is that of striking a balance between caring for the baby and paying attention to their academic work. Furthermore, there appears to be no support systems available in schools to help them deal with the reconciliation of the two roles (motherhood and being a learner). Despite the recent policies, which protect teenage mothers from mockery, teasing and marginalization by educators and learners, teenage mothers still experience challenges. These challenges need to be investigated.

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to explore the challenges experienced by teenage mothers in secondary schools.

1.5 OBJECTIVES

- To identify the challenges faced by teenage mothers in high schools.
- To suggest strategies that these teenage mothers' peers, educators and parents can employ to assist them to cope with the challenges they face.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the challenges faced by teenage mothers in secondary schools?
- What support is available at schools for teenage mothers?
- What are the perceptions of the educators towards teenage mothers?

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The results of this study may benefit policy makers when grappling with the problem of pregnant teenagers at schools. The results may also support schools to successfully deal with

the problem of teenage motherhood and may assist teenage mothers to cope with different challenges they encounter in secondary schools.

1.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the background of the problem was outlined, followed by the aim and objectives of the study and lastly, the significance of the problem was discussed to highlight why this study is important.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, literature relating to the challenges faced by teenage mothers in secondary schools is reviewed. This is intended to locate the problem in its proper contextual perspective. The chapter follows the following design:

- First, conceptualisation of the problem;
- Second, historical and geographical perspective of the problem;
- Third, methodological approaches used in the study of the phenomenon thus far, and
- Fourth, exploration of existing gaps.

2.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE PROBLEM

According to the Encyclopaedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society (2008), it is difficult to define exactly what constitutes teenage motherhood, because of the inconsistencies in defining its age limits. The conception of a teenage mother can be divided into two broad views. Those, who see it as defined by (a) age (under the 20 years) and (b) those that have not completed their education.

2.2.1 Teenage Mothers as Defined by Age (under the age of 20)

According to Save a Child Report (2000), teenage motherhood is formally defined as birth in a young woman, who has not reached her twentieth birthday when the birth occurs, regardless of whether the woman is married or is legally an adult. Johns, Moncloa and Grong (2000) state that teenage motherhood is when a teenaged or under aged girl (in the teenage years of 13 – 19) becomes a parent.

The United Nations' Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2001) alludes that teenage motherhood is when a woman aged between 15 and 19 has a baby. According to their statistics, 67% of women of child bearing age are aged between 15 to 19 years.

The Health – Cares.Net (2005) explains that teenage motherhood is a birth that occurs in an adolescent. An adolescent is a female, who has reached puberty and is 19 years old or younger. Teenage motherhood is the phenomenon of teenage girls giving birth and is a contemporary social issue in some nations, especially in the USA, while in developing countries teenage birth is for most part, not an issue, since many women are expected to be married and with children before they are twenty.

Odu and Christian (2007) are of the opinion that women have tended to begin child bearing during their early twenties, while Yutokoutreach (2007) defines teenage motherhood as an under aged girl becoming a mother. These sources also mentioned that the term is restricted to those under the age of legal adulthood, being 18 in most countries in the world including Papua New Guinea. According to Fox (2008), teenage motherhood can be loosely defined as a girl giving birth before reaching the legal age of adulthood. While teenage motherhood is looked down upon by most developed countries, certain ethnic groups in the world actually welcome and celebrate the phenomenon, because it is seen as a clear sign of fertility in the young female. Motherhood confirms that she is perfectly capable of bearing children.

Sams (2008) concur with Fox (2008) and Yutokoutreach (2007) that teenage motherhood is birth by an under aged girl and the term applies to those under the age of threshold of legal adulthood. Adulthood starts at the age of 16 in some places and 18 in others. We Want Nice Things (2008) also define teenage motherhood in terms of legal adulthood wherein in the USA; teenage motherhood is when a minor, according to the law, under aged girl gives birth, while in United Kingdom (UK), there is a legal definition whereby a woman is considered to be teenage mother if she gives birth before her 18th birthday. The term in everyday speech usually refers to women, who have not reached the age of majority legal adulthood, which varies across the world.

Luong (2008) asserts that teenage mothers are women, who had their first birth under the age of 20 while Garblah (2009) states that teenagers, who give birth to children yearly are between 15 and 19 years, and these teenagers cannot afford to support the children, as a result their children may get involved in crime to survive due to improper upbringing.

The Liberia Demographic Health Survey (2008) as cited in Garblah (2009) indicates that at least one out of three girls aged 15 to 19, have had children, while more than one out of six girls between the same age group (15 to 19) give birth every year. The Encyclopaedia of

Children and Childhood in History and Society (2008), reflects that studies focusing on causes and consequences of teenage motherhood typically include young women 15 to 19 years old. Births occurring among adolescents younger than 15, are often included only in aggregate national statistics. Teenage motherhood refers to the birth of child to a woman less than 20, whether married or not (Save a Child Report, 2000). The World Health Organization (WHO, 2011) estimates 10% of all world births are delivered by 15 to 19 year old adolescent girls.

2.2.2 Teenage Mothers as Defined by Incomplete Education

Farlex McGraw Hill Concise Dictionary of Modern Medicine (2002) states that teenage motherhood is understood to occur in a woman, who has not completed her core education, secondary school, has few or no marketable skills, is financially dependent upon her parents and/or continues to live at home and is often mentally immature.

According to UNICEF (2001), teenage mothers are women aged between 15 and 19, who have babies and have less than upper secondary education with most of them coming from households, which have below bottom quintile income and are mostly not working, inactive or unemployed.

In this study a teenage mother refers to a woman aged between 13 and 19, who has a baby regardless of the marital status. The term teenage mother will be used synonymously and interchangeably with adolescent mother and early child bearers as preferred terms by other authors in the related topics.

2.3 HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE PROBLEM

In the previous section, conceptualisation of the problem was looked at. In this section, historical and geographical perspectives are looked into. Industrialised and developing countries have distinctively different rates of teenage births. A distinction will be made between developed and developing countries hereunder.

2.3.1 Historical and Geographical Perspective of Teenage Mothers in Developed Countries

In many developed countries teenage motherhood is associated with many social issues, which include amongst others lower educational levels and higher rates of poverty. In

developed regions such as North America and Western Europe, teenage mothers tend to be unmarried and adolescent birth is seen as a social issue and carries a social stigma in many communities and cultures. Teenage motherhood in these countries is usually outside marriage and not welcomed by family and society (Save the Child, 2000).

2.3.1.1 Teenage motherhood in the US

The US has the highest teenage birth (51,1% birth per 1000) compared to other developed countries. This is of a major concern and is a social, public, and health concern (Shaw et.al, 2006). About 5% of US teenage girls aged between 15 and 17 give birth each year (Save a Child, 2011).

According to Rank (2008), the history of adolescence/teenage mothers goes back to the 1820s when the growing number of middle-class parents had been sending their adolescent children to high schools instead of sending them to work or allowing them to marry. New child labour laws, compulsory education legislation, the establishment of juvenile courts, efforts to control teenage sexuality and a myriad of other age-specific policies reflected new social attitudes defining modern adolescence. In 1900, less than 1% of males and 11% of females, aged 14 to 19 were never married. In 1930s the Great Depression temporarily slowed the trend, but post war years saw a dramatic rise in early marriage and teenage pregnancy rates.

The 1940s, 1950s and 1960s included the twentieth century's highest teenage birth rates (79,5%; 91,0% and 69,7% per thousand respectively). By 1960, nearly one third of American females had their first child before reaching age 20. Teenage birth declined in the 1970's; 1980s and 1990s. By 1990s, almost 25% of all babies were born to unmarried women. Teenage mothers gave birth to one third of these infants, but most Black and Hispanic teenagers were more likely to have children than their Caucasian counter parts.

After the 1970's teenage motherhood/parenting became a social, economic and political issue. To many critics unmarried teenage mothers became symbols of American immorality and the growing Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) welfare programme. It appeared as though teenage pregnancy and parenthood, whether inside or outside of marriage, was an unacceptable and a modern social problem. In 1996, the AFDC was discontinued and restrictions were placed on federal assistance to unwed teenage mothers. Teenage birth rates

have continued to decline, but the reasons are not clear, it appears that young people are making choices about parenthood for themselves.

2.3.1.2 Teenage mothers in Canada

Teenage birth in women aged between 15 to 19 in Canada has declined since 1994 (46,7% per 1000 per person age) to 42,7% per 1000 per person age in 1997, and the decline is attributed to effective use of contraceptives (Dryburgh, 2007). Teenage birth continued to decrease to 16% per 1000 per person age in 2002. Thus the Canadian teenage birth rate has shown a steady decline with a downwards trend for both young (15 to 17) and older (18 to 19) teenagers in the period 1992 to 2002. The highest teenage birth in Canada is in small towns located in rural parts of Peninsular Ontario (Canadian Ministry of Education, 1998).

2.3.1.3 Teenage mothers in Europe

According to UNICEF (2001), the UK has the highest rate of teenage mothers in Europe (26,4% per 1000 women aged between 15 and 19). Shaw et al (2006) state that the UK when compared to other developed countries has the second highest teenage birth rate. In 2002, the rate of teenage births in London Borough of Lambeth was 100,4% per person per 1000 women as compared to 3,3% per person per 1000 women in the central regions of Italy.

Teenage motherhood is a social concern in the UK and the country is employing some strategies to reduce this problem (Shaw et al, 2006). French, Mercer, Kane, Kingori, Stephenson, Witkinson, Gruddy and Lachowycz (2007), confirm that teenage motherhood has been declining in Europe in countries like the Netherlands and Scandinavia since 1970 and this decline is associated with good sex education and high levels of contraceptive use. In addition to good sex education and high contraceptive use is the traditional beliefs held by countries like Spain and Italy. Stigmatisation attached to teenage motherhood also contributed to the decline.

According to WHO (2011), teenage birth rates are declining, it was 61,8% in 1990, due to abstinence 25% and 75% of effective contraceptive use by all racial groups.

2.3.1.4 Teenage mothers in Asia

Teenage child bearing is high in Asia. The highest rate is in South Asia (71% to 119% per 1000 per person age). Early marriage means adolescent motherhood particularly in rural

regions. Teenage motherhood has decreased sharply in Indonesia and Malaysia, because of developed marriages although it has remained higher in Indonesia. Teenage motherhood is amongst the lowest in industrialised Asian nations such as South Korea (2,9% per 1000 per person age) and Singapore because of an increased age of marriage (Save a Child Report, 2000), whereas Thailand has a high rate of teenage birth (60% per 1000 per person age). Measures to alert teenagers about the dangers of teenage motherhood and sexually transmitted diseases have been taken by the Thailand Government (WHO, 2011).

2.3.1.5 Teenage mothers in Australia

Australia has the highest teenage birth (18.4% per 1000 per person age) compared to other comparable countries, but this is not a prominent policy concern. Australia offers opportunities to study the outcomes of teenage parenthood in a country where there may be fewer stigmas than in countries that portray teenage parenthood as a major health and social problem (Save a Child Report; 2000).

2.3.2 The Historical and Geographical Perspectives of Teenage Motherhood in Developing Countries

Developing countries have small scale programmes concerning the reproductive health of teenagers and these programmes are not centrally coordinated. A staggering amount of 13 million children are born to women under the age of twenty annually, worldwide, more than 19% of these births occur in developing countries. Teenage mothers in developing countries are often married and their birth may be welcomed by family and society and therefore, does not involve a social stigma (Save a child Report, 2000). According to Rank (2008) rural areas experience the lowest age of marriage and few people worry about teenage birth as long as the girl is married before giving birth and this leads to a strong pressure to marry before giving birth.

2.3.2.1 Teenage mothers in Africa

According to Save a Child Report (2000), Sub Saharan Africa has the highest teenage birth in the world (143 per 1000 girls aged 15 to 19), where women tend to marry at an early age. For example in Niger, 87% of women surveyed were married and 53% had given birth to a child before the age of 18. Teenage birth and motherhood is seen as a blessing, because it is a proof of young women's fertility.

According to Garblah (2009) one out of three Nigerian girls 15 to 19 gives birth every year. Keller, Hilton, and Twumasi-Ankrah (1999) allude that records in Ghana public hospitals show that one third of child birth occur to women below 19 and the survey conducted by the United Nations Regional Institute for Population studies reveals that one in every three girls aged 15 to 19 years have given birth.

Gustafsson and Worku (2007) reveal that countries like Kenya, Nigeria and Zimbabwe have high fertility rates that are more than a 100% per 1000 per person age. In addition the duo explains that the rate of teenage birth in South Africa (SA) is at a high of 55% per 1000 Blacks, 82% per 1000 for Coloureds, 8% per 1000 Asians and 3% for Caucasians in 2001.

The number of school girls' birth jumped from 1,169 in 2005 to 2,336 in 2006 in Gauteng, according to statistics released in the provincial parliament. SA has a huge teenage birth problem; one in three girls has had a baby by the age of 20, according to the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) report (2009). The problem is not equally serious in all parts of the country, on average two to three girls give birth at a typical school with 1200 to 1400 pupils, but what is clear is that there are hotspots where things are horribly wrong. The Gauteng figures indicated that 71% of pupils were pregnant and became teenage mothers at one school in Soweto, a huge township on the outskirts of Johannesburg.

The high percentage of teenage birth according to HSRC report (2009) is attributed to the attitudes of nurses towards teenagers when it comes to the provision of contraceptives. The study also found that the social pressure often prevented young women from using contraception. The girls felt they would only be accepted as women once they had proved their fertility. Many mothers wanted their teenage daughters to become mothers so that they could have a baby at home again. Some observers suggested that the child support grant provided by the state was an incentive to young girls to give birth.

2.4. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

The problem of teenage mothers has been investigated through different approaches. Most of the studies undertaken thus far have been qualitative, except for a few that have been quantitative in nature. This review focuses on the studies conducted between 2001 and 2011.

2.4.1 Qualitative Studies

Chevalier and Viitanen (2002) conducted a qualitative study to determine whether teenage child bearing reduces schooling, labour market experience and adult wages. The decisions to be a teenage mother, to quit school and be less attached to the labour market might all stem from some personal or family characteristics. The findings of this study revealed that in Britain, teenage child bearing decreases the probability of post schooling by 12 to 24% and employment experience by up to 3 years. This challenge of reduction in schooling opportunities, because of teenage motherhood, needs to be investigated further.

Madhavan and Thomas (2005) conducted a qualitative study to contribute to an ongoing discussion about the relative importance of child bearing in determining a girl's life chances. The authors particularly paid attention to issues, such as:

- societies undergoing major transitions,
- adolescent fertility,
- educational attainment (a prominent feature in national-level public health dependency as focused on youth), and
- to suggest new possibilities for intervention work in both family planning and schooling.

Their study found that there is a consensus that child bearing impedes educational success for girls and they suggest that a balance is important between adequate care giving capacity and socio-economic stability. The need to strike a balance between caring for the baby and effectively attending to school activities is of paramount importance and this study intends to address that.

Another study of a qualitative nature was conducted by Gustafsson and Worku (2006) with the aim of looking into the effect of adoption on the performance of birth mothers, that is, teenage mothers, who gave up their children for adoption. It was found that there was a decline in educational performance of these teenage mothers after giving up their children for adoption and then going back to school. The decline in performance ranged from 1,7% to 17,6%, which is caused by many factors amongst others, lack of support from family, friends and educators. This challenge of a decline in educational performance needs to be taken further to determine if it also exists on South Africa.

Another qualitative study is that of French et al (2007), who wanted to describe the young people's knowledge and use of contraceptive services over initial stages of England's teenage pregnancy strategy and to investigate factors associated with the use of different services. A random sample of young people aged 13 to 21 years was interviewed to obtain information. The findings were that 77% of women interviewed, knew a service they could use to obtain information about sex. Despite the fact that teenagers knew different contraceptive measures they continued to fall pregnant and thus becoming teenage mothers not knowing the challenges that await them as they return to school to continue with their studies.

Garwick, Rhodes, Peterson-Hickey and Hellerstedt (2008) conducted a participatory action research study with the aim of identifying Pregnancy Prevention Strategies from the perspectives of both male and female urban native youth to inform programme development. The findings, which participants emphasised, were:

- the consequences of adolescent pregnancy;
- the necessity to enhance and develop more pregnancy prevention programmes for native youth in schools and community based organisations;
- to improve access to contraceptives;
- to discuss teenage pregnancy with native youth; and
- to activate key messages and media to reach native youth.

Another study of qualitative nature was conducted by Shaningwa (2007) in Namibia to investigate the educationally related challenges faced by teenage mothers when they returned to school. Two schools from the Kavango Education Region were chosen as a sample where four teenage mother respondents were interviewed. The findings revealed that teenage mothers' challenges ranged from social exclusion to the need to manage the dual responsibility of motherhood and studying.

Dlamini et al (2003) conducted a qualitative study in the Southern Hho-hho region of Swaziland to explore and describe the problems experienced by teenage mothers in their schooling. In particular the study wanted to identify problems that teenage mothers face physically, socially, culturally, emotionally, spiritually, economically and educationally. Their findings were that teenage mothers experienced problems in almost all the dimensions of a holistic being. This source identified a lack of support from individuals and institutions as the major cause. Teenage mothers reported being devastated, fearful, lonely, frustrated and

unhappy. Whether the same challenges prevail in present sample needs to be established. In the present study the researcher sought to establish whether teenage mothers in South Africa experience the same challenges as those in Swaziland. It appears, because of the nature of the study, the views of educators of these teenage mothers in the Dlamini et al (2003) study were not sought or taken into account.

The matter of teenage motherhood was taken further by De Villers and Kekesi (2004), who conducted a qualitative study with the aim of describing the social interaction of teenage mothers at Ga-Rankuwa Hospital during and after their pregnancy. A number of 70 teenage mothers were interviewed using the semi-structured interview schedule. The findings reveal that the majority of teenagers, who fall pregnant do so while still at school and only a few first informed their mothers about the pregnancy first, the majority opted to confide someone they trusted soon after discovering that they were pregnant. With many teenagers falling pregnant and thus becoming mothers while still at school, they need to be alerted and informed of the challenges that teenage mothers come across in schools, due to being mothers.

Another study of a qualitative nature is that of Ritcher and Mlambo (2005), who studied 32 teenagers aged between 13 and 19. A convenience sample was used to select respondents, who were then interviewed. The purpose of the study was to explore and describe the perceptions of teenagers in Bushbuckridge District on teenage pregnancy. The findings of this study elicited that teenage pregnancy poses significant social and health problems in the Bushbuckridge District and this has implications for all health care and professionals. In the present study the researcher's intention was to take this matter further, to identify and explore the challenges that teenage mothers face in secondary schools.

Zondo (2006) conducted a qualitative study in the informal settlements outside Ethekewini to explore the challenges faced by teenage mothers in schools using semi-structured interviews. His findings were that teenage mothers experienced difficulties in balancing their educational responsibilities and taking care of their babies.

Mohase (2006) also conducted a qualitative study to obtain a better understanding of the learning process and factors that may affect pregnant and parenting learners in Soshanguve Secondary Schools. His findings were that schools were not "pregnant/parenting learner

friendly” The findings by Mohase (2006) need to be investigated further to determine whether this was also happening in Hlanganani South Schools.

Chigona and Chetty (2007) also researched the topic of teenage mothers; the duo endeavoured to determine how teenage mothers coped with schooling and how much support was rendered to them. The target group in this study were teenage mothers aged between 14 and 18 that had babies before completing their secondary school and returned to school after the birth of their babies, that is, those who temporarily dropped out of school due to their pregnancy. School heads of these learners were also interviewed. The findings indicated that teenage mothers in Cape Town received insufficient support, both physically and emotionally and the consequences were that many teenage mothers quit school or did not succeed with schooling.

Another study by Chigona and Chetty (2008) conducted in Cape Town, South Africa to define how much support was offered to teenage mothers to facilitate their secondary schooling, thus enabling them to complete their education and become self-reliant. Information was gathered using interviews from teenage mothers, their parents and their educators. The findings were that many teenage mothers failed to succeed with schooling, because they lacked the support to avoid numerous disruptions to school attendance. The present study differs with that of Chigona and Chetty in terms of context, because the researcher wanted to explore the challenges faced by teenage mothers in Hlanganani Secondary Schools.

2.4.2 Quantitative Studies

Hofferth et al (2001) steered a survey to identify the effects of early childhood bearing on schooling over time. Their findings explicated a negative impact on teenage birth rates and years of completed schooling. Teenage mothers completed 1,9 - 2,2 fewer years of education than girls, who delayed their first birth until age 30 or older.

A survey tool was used by Carter and Spear (2002) to identify the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of a rural teenage population as they relate to pregnancy prevention and intention. The survey session consisted of 253 grade 09 learners in county high school. The findings were that girls were sexually active, several had already experienced pregnancy and some were at risk of intentional pregnancy. With teenagers in this study involving themselves in

sexual activities and others being at risk of intentional pregnancy, they needed to be informed about the challenges teenage mothers face when they have children while still at school.

Another study was conducted in Brisbane, Australia by Shaw et al (2005) on women and their offspring, who received antenatal care at major public hospitals. The aim of the study was to examine the association of maternal age at first antenatal visit with offspring's psychological behavioural and health characteristics when the offspring (the teenage children of the teenage mother) were aged 14 years. The results indicated that the 14 year old offspring of mothers who were aged 18 years and younger when giving birth compared to those, who were offspring of older mothers, were more likely to have been in contact with the criminal justice system and were more likely to smoke regularly and consume alcohol.

Vinnerljung et al (2007) undertook a study in Sweden to assess the prevalence and odds for teenage parenthood at school. A National Register Data for children born in Sweden between 1972 and 1983 and former child welfare clients with varying intervention experiences were contacted. These authors found that youth of both sexes, who received child welfare services in adolescence are a high risk group for teenage parenthood as compared to those without child welfare experiences. Albeit, their study did not look at their hardships at schools, it may imply this was a burden that they carried even during the school days. This current study intended to alert girls about the hardships they would encounter if they become parents at a tender age or while still at school.

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used by Hopane (2008) to examine the role that lack of communication or poor communication plays in the prevalence of teenage pregnancy and motherhood in schools. The author's findings were that many teenagers became parents at an early age because of the social grant; they needed free money to spend as they wished. This study needs to explore the challenges that teenage mothers face at school in spite of the support grant they receive. Teenagers need to be reminded that caring for the baby while at school is worth far more than the child support grant and that teenage motherhood is 'a no go area'.

2.5 EXPLORATION OF EXISTING GAPS

Despite these findings, there remains lack of further clarity on some identified points. Further data are required to establish what the challenges are in impoverished communities like

Hlanganani South Circuit. In particular, data are needed to conclude whether the findings of the other studies confirm or disprove those in this population. Areas that need special attention are:

- (a) school attendance,
- (b) educational performance,
- (c) teenage motherhood and their image,
- (d) schooling demands,
- (e) policy demands,
- (f) lack of support from school,
- (g) lack of support by parents,
- (h) lack of support from community, and
- (i) lack of professional counselling.

2.5.1 Teenage Motherhood and School Attendance

The schooling of teenage mothers in this study is classified into two main categories, namely:

(a) Those who fail to cope with schooling, and (b) Those who cope with schooling.

2.5.1.1 Those who fail to cope with schooling

The schooling of teenage mothers is mostly characterized by absenteeism wherein one finds that they must attend to infant related problems, whether illness, baby clinics or collection of the child support grant. The fact that teenage mothers do not regularly attend school is confirmed by the study conducted by Mohase (2006) wherein he found out that 90% of his respondents often left school on a monthly basis, to take children for a medical “check-up” (post natal examination) at different health centres. The long queues they join before getting help causes the teenage mother to be away from school for the rest of the day. From the above it can be concluded safely that a teenage mother could lose a day at school per month because of infant related problems, excluding other personal reasons for absence, including their own health.

Chigona and Chetty (2007) confirm Mohase’s findings when it comes to missing classes due to motherhood. The duo indicated that it is very common for infants to fall ill and the teenage mother has to take the baby to the hospital. If the child has to be admitted to hospital for a long period of time, the teenage mother has to miss classes. The Canadian Ministry of

Education (1998), also determined that teenage mothers miss lessons because, their babies are ill and have to take them to the clinic or hospital. Hopane (2008) mentions most teenage mothers lag behind at school because of poor attendance. In addition, the author explains it is too difficult to complete their schooling when expecting or looking after the baby.

According to Lloyd and Mensch (1999), as cited in Chigona and Chetty (2007), teenage pregnancy and mothering are the major causes of secondary school dropout. A teenage mother, who is frequently absent from school, is more likely to quit school for good, because she is unable to catch up the missed school work due to the dual responsibilities facing her (being a learner and a parent at the same time). The difficulty of taking care of the baby while being a learner has been clearly indicated by a respondent in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2007:7),

“Sometimes you need to be a student, sometimes a mother and to balance the two is a bit hard. But the mothering takes much of you because like when the child is sick you have to think about the child all the time and for me it is hard to keep the baby at the back of my mind when I am at school. So it is really much more difficult just to break away from my child”.

The bond between the teenage mother and her baby and the lack of concentration thereof leads to the teenage mother dropping out of school to take care of her baby.

According to Hofferth et al (2001), early child birth causes young woman, who would not otherwise do so, to drop out of school. Barnett, Arroyo, Margo Devoe, and Duggan (2004) are of the opinion that teenage mothers drop out of school either during pregnancy or after birth, because they have too many absences after birth. Teenage mothers are likely to drop out of school and never return (Grant & Hallman, 2006). In the study by Chigona and Chetty (2008:273) a teenage mother narrated her experience as far as mothering and schooling is concerned as follows:

“It is not easy when you have a baby, when sometimes I want to do school work ... I don't have time... it is so hard to find time ... I have to do the house chores ... It is also hard for me to do my homework at night but during the day I am busy with the household chores and the baby ... I cannot study at home because I don't have time and space ... but I also get tired by night ... sometimes I do not have time to do my homework ... sometimes the baby always wants to be with me so I ignore the school work because I can't do homework when I am with the baby”.

A teenage parent in the study by Garwick et al (2008) indicated the difficulty of mothering a child while still a learner. "I tell them how much time it takes between juggling school, a job and the baby".

According to Zondo (2006), teenage mothers experienced difficulty in balancing their educational responsibility and taking care of the baby. This confirms the findings of the Canadian Ministry of Education (1998) that teenage mothers fall behind when it comes to school work, because of dual responsibilities, that is, motherhood and schooling.

Grant and Hallman (2006), also assert that the birth of a baby marks the end of schooling for the teenage mother, which Mokgalabone (1999:60) calls 'serious school disruption'. The fact that teenage pregnancy and motherhood disrupt schooling was also raised by De Villiers and Kekesi (2004:24) when they stated, "the majority of them fall pregnant while at school, which results in the disruption of their education". Schooling is not an easy task for teenage mothers according Kaufman et al (2001) there are a number of factors that influence whether a teenage mother is able to continue schooling after the birth of the baby. Most of the factors depend on the girls' ability to manage logistics and finances associated with mothering and schooling simultaneously.

Theron and Dunn (2006) maintain that, adolescent child bearing is especially disruptive to the educational process of girls and as a consequence many teenage mothers leave school and never return. The duo also explains that teenage child bearing may be associated with a syndrome of failure, failure to remain in the school, since teenage motherhood is disruptive when it comes to school attendance. Ehlers (2003) confirms the disruption of schooling brought about by teenage motherhood when he mentions, "many adolescent mothers will need to discontinue their education limiting their chances of finding jobs with salaries, which can sustain these mothers and their children". Dlamini et al (2005) believe that interrupted education negatively impact on teenage mothers' expectation for their own future.

Teenage motherhood or caring and rearing children thus consumes time and energy that could otherwise be spent on schooling, work and leisure time activities (Hofferth et al, 2001). The authors also explain that early child bearers are less likely than their childless peers to complete high school and to complete college. Early first birth is detrimental to a young woman in that it causes her to complete less schooling than her childless peer. Mangino (2008) concurs with Hofferth et al (2001) who believe that mothers, who deliver their first

child before the age of 18, are twice as likely to drop out before finishing high school. The former source also explicates that early parenting limits a young mother's likelihood of completing an education necessary for a well-paying job. Only 32% of teenage mothers, who begin their families before the age of 18 completed high school. Bryant (2006) estimates that in the US, teenage child bearing reduces the chances of completing high school by 23%, thus, teenage motherhood has a negative impact on school attainment. Teenage motherhood accounts for 31% of all school dropout cases among girls, without family support, a teenage mother is forced to leave school (Mulama; 2011). It now seems convincing that teenage motherhood makes it difficult for teenage mothers to attend to school matters effectively and this reduces chances of high school graduation (Hofferth et al, 2001).

Mengo (2009) asserts that despite the financial support many teenage mothers continue to drop out of schools, because they find it difficult to balance their education and the obligations that come with being a parent. She also believes that it is difficult to be both a parent and a student, because sometimes you lose concentration, especially when the baby is not well and you are in school. The difficulty of dual responsibility was also alluded to by Van Harmelen (2007) when he indicated that teenage mothers faced the challenge of motherhood and studying at the same time.

2.5.1.2 Those who cope with schooling

Although different authors have highlighted the difficulties encountered by teenage mothers on their journey to complete their education, there are those teenage mothers, who are able to cope with schooling. According to Shaningwa (2007), teenage mothers, who live with a female adult are able to cope with schooling, because they have somebody they trust to take care of their babies while at school. The author further indicated that teenage mothers, who are in boarding schools, succeed mostly, because they are not always in contact with their babies and therefore do have time to study.

Teenage mothers, who receive extra lessons at their convenience, are also able to succeed with schooling. With special support from dedicated educators in special schools, teenage mothers succeed with their schooling (Hill, 2011). Tillman (2008) confirms that with the provision of a flexible schedule for teenage mothers, educators succeed in helping them graduate.

The study by Zeck et al (2007) revealed that some adolescent mothers continue their training and achieve a higher level of education after 2,5 to 5 years following delivery of the baby. This proves that in spite of all the hardships that teenage mothers come across; some are able to reconcile the two roles or responsibilities. The number of adolescents leaving their children with their own parents increased, which indicates the independence and improvement of the education level as well as securing a job is mainly made possible by the presence of the adolescent's parents. Zeck et al (2007) further on say that the number of employed adolescent mothers almost doubled within the same time frame.

Hofferth et al (2001), indicate that even though early child bearing influences young women's schooling, its influence is weaker than previously believed. Mkhwanazi (2006) says that the idea that teenage motherhood result in disruption of schooling placing teenage mother at the risk of unemployment, was and is still not a given in South Africa. Close to half of her sample of girls, who became pregnant while at school returned to school after giving birth if they had financial means (Manzini, 2001). Preston-Whyte (1991) when talking about teenage motherhood and schooling agrees with Zeck et al (2007) that parents would take on the responsibility of caring for the grandchildren so that they would by whatever means send their daughter back to school after they had borne a child. The Canadian Ministry of Education (1998) asserts that teenage mothers need support if they are to realise their educational goals, and the support must include amongst others housing, better child care and advice.

The influence of teenage motherhood on schooling seems to have changed in terms of time and context. The influence of teenage motherhood on schooling according to the findings indicates that teenage motherhood seems to be a problem in developing countries as compared to developed countries.

2.5.2 Teenage Mothers and Educational Performance

Teenage motherhood has a negative effect on the educational performance of both the mother and the infant. The double role of being a mother and learner at the same time decreases the chances of the teenage mother's educational success, because of increased responsibility (Davies, 2000). According to Bryant (2006:133),

“Babies of adolescent mothers are more likely to be born prematurely and suffer from low birth weight. The long term effects of low birth weight infants

add additional stress to the adolescent parent(s). Long term effects of prematurity and low birth weight are cognitive problems, lower IQs and a decreased likelihood to finish high school”.

The fact that teenage mothers give birth to low Intelligence Quotient (IQ) babies was also confirmed by Terry-Humen, Manlove & Moore (2005) that, children born of adolescent parents perform lower on standardized tests and have a decreased chance of completing high school than children born to older parents. Girls, who become pregnant and mothers during adolescence are more likely to have children, who may be unsuccessful in school (Carter & Spear; 2002). De Villiers and Kekesi (2004) explain that children of teenage mothers are at an increased risk of cognitive and psychological deficits. Zeck et al (2007) indicate that both adolescent fathers and mothers are more likely than their peers, who are not parents to have poor academic performance. The low academic performance by teenage mothers is not surprising considering the double responsibility they are faced with. That teenage motherhood does contribute to low performance has been confirmed by teenage mothers in the study conducted by Mohase (2006:58) who agreed,

“If it would not have been of the fact that they have babies, they would have been far much better learners. They see themselves as having a much heavier burden than girls who do not have children. They argue that they can’t study nor do their home works or assignments at home like they used to do them before. They have to put up with their ‘attention seeking’ children and ignore their school work” [sic.].

The teacher respondent in the same study confirmed what the teenage mothers related when it came to performance, that is, they observed a decline in performance and the reason behind the decline in performance is that a learner has too much to handle than the one, who does not have such a burden.

Hopane (2008:23), when talking about teenage mothers at schools say,

“Teenagers cannot focus on what is being taught in class. They only think of becoming mothers. If a teenage girl is already pregnant, she would listen to the movement of the baby in the womb”.

The lack of concentration in class, which ultimately leads to poor performance, was also confirmed in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2007:7), where a teenage mother respondent explained,

“When the child is sick you have to think about the child all the time and for me it is hard to keep the baby at the back of my mind when I am at school. So it is really much more difficult just to break away from my child”.

The words of the teenage mother above is a clear indication of what she concentrates on, something else, other than what happens in the class room, that is, her mind is focused on the wellbeing of her child and not on the class activity.

The lack of concentration by teenage mothers was also brought to light by the principals of the two schools in the study conducted by Shaningwa (2007) when she mentioned that teenage mothers are often pre-occupied thinking of what might be happening to their children. The lack of concentration lowers their educational performance. She further explained that the lack of concentration is greater on teenage mothers, who leave their children with neighbours and care givers, because they do not fully trust them as compared to those, who leave their children with relatives and parents. Hopane (2008:23) adds that teenage mothers “easily fall asleep in class”. When they fall asleep in class it means that they do not concentrate well and obviously miss most of the teaching and as a result they perform very low.

Zeck et al (2007) is of the opinion that there is evidence that teenage pregnancy and early parenthood can lead to poor educational achievement, poverty and social isolation, while Moore, Driscoll and Lindberg (1998) believe that low academic performance is a predictor of non-marital adolescent births. According to Dlamini et al (2005), teenage mothers envisaged problems in achieving educational qualifications, because they were no longer accepted by their peers or by their school teachers and they had the extra burden of caring for their babies. That teenage motherhood has a negative bearing on the performance of teenage mothers was again alluded to by Bryant (2006:134),

“Becoming an adolescent parent can inhibit obtaining a high school education, successful career and establishing financial stability... without a high school diploma, teenage mothers are subject to low paying jobs or receiving government support that substantiate a life of poverty”.

Polit and Kahn (1986) comment that teenage parenthood includes high rates of educational deficits and economic hardship for the mother. Hopane (2008:24), when talking about

teenage mothers says, “The girl knows her future is destroyed and could not care less about anything at school”.

Kernway (1990) explains that low self-esteem is a problem and prevents certain individuals from making the best in their schooling and lives. Teenage mothers have low self-esteem, they do not believe in themselves anymore. “I doubt myself now, I don’t think that I will be able to finish school”, related one teenage mother respondent in the study by Dlamini et al (2005:7). McCauley-Brown (2005) confirms the low esteem of teenage mothers when he explains that they have low self-confidence and are no longer certain of their ability to master academic skills. Teenage mothers no longer fit in well in group discussions or activities, because they feel like they do not belong at school anymore; this has a negative result on the quality of their work or performance thereof (Canadian Ministry of Education, 1998).

Teenage mothers need to be motivated as much as possible so that they succeed with their education. This will enable them to take care of their children and in turn make a meaningful contribution to the economy of the country.

2.5.3 Teenage Mothers and their Image

Giving birth to a child while still at school does not grant a girl a high status; instead she is looked down upon and disrespected by men. In Nigeria, men believe that anyone, who is silly enough to get pregnant in her teens, must be sexually loose, stupid and ill-bred. Teenage mothers are seen as a means of sexual gratification and men will not spare her a second thought when they have satisfied themselves (Chapati; 2009).

Teenage mothers in the study by Ritcher and Mlambo (2005:65) explained,

“Teenage motherhood does not give any teenager a high status. It is a big stumbling block in our education and gives parents more financial burden”.

Another teenage parent in the same study (*Ibid*:64) elicited, “giving birth to an illegitimate baby while at school is a disgrace to me and my parents”. She added, “The stigma attached to teenage pregnancy tended to cling to the young mother and her family”. Two teenage mothers in the same study related that their parents insisted they should terminate their pregnancies as they regarded it as a disgrace. The notion that teenage motherhood is a disgrace was also confirmed by the findings of Tanga and Uys (1996).

The matter of teenage motherhood not being a status, but a disgrace was taken further by Dlamini et al (2003). Motherhood is a disgrace to the community (according to Swazi culture), which deprived them of many opportunities like participating in the traditional reeds dance and reduced their bridal price. A girl who becomes pregnant before marriage is a disgrace to the family. This fact was also alluded to by a teenage mother in the study by Ritcher and Mlambo (2005:67),

“My father did not want me at home because I was pregnant. He said I did not belong to his family anymore and would have nothing to do with me anymore”.

Non-marital child bearing is still not acceptable to the majority of Americans, but almost half of black and white women aged 20 – 29 find it acceptable (Hofferth et al, 2001). In many countries, having children outside marriage is considered to be a social problem and the children are termed illegitimate, when this happens to teenagers, the matter is considerably worse (De Villiers & Kekesi, 2004). According to Boulden (2001) teenage mothers portray a bad image on non-parenting learners and also degrade the image of the school.

Many teenagers become mothers at an early age, because they thought that it is a good sign of womanhood and it would give them a high status in the community (Preston-Whyte, 1991). Ritcher and Mlambo (2005) agree that many teenagers became pregnant because they wanted to prove their womanhood. Ritcher and Mlambo (2005) also explained that teenage mothers had the impression that child bearing gives a woman a high status and they were therefore bound to have children. They engaged themselves in unprotected sex despite the high spreading of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). The high risk of engaging in unprotected sex clearly indicates that teenage pregnancy and motherhood is no longer a mistake, unintended and unplanned as said by Magwetshu (1990) but it is a purposeful act.

Teenagers saw motherhood as a positive choice and a way to a more adult role (Bryant, 2006), no wonder the report that detailed the case of one school that had 144 pregnant pupils in 2007 (Sunday Times as cited in Chigona and Chetty 2008). Some parents saw child bearing as a status and encouraged their children to have babies. In their study, Ritcher and Mlambo (2005:67) quote one teenage mother saying, “My mother said she wants to see my first born before she dies”. Such words inspired teenagers to have babies hoping that they would become respected members of the community, only to find that they were faced with a

nightmare. Instead of enjoying their new found role, they were now considered adults and had to mix with elderly members of the community. Motherhood caused teenagers to be old before their time (Dlamini et al, 2003). De Villiers and Kekesi (2004) explained that in some societies premarital fertility is widespread and culturally acceptable and unmarried woman may use sexual relations and pregnancy to achieve marriage. They added that in certain South African communities, there is a custom that a woman needs to prove her fertility by having a baby before marriage can be considered.

Teenage mothering was seen as a passage to adulthood, especially where middle class aspirations did not apply. It is clear that every teenager wants to meet the expectations of the society she finds herself in and as a result become a teenage mother in order to be an acceptable member of the society, not knowing or understanding what is awaiting her. In the study conducted by Tabi (2002) teenage parents perceived motherhood as a sign of independence from parental control and authority. The independence brought by early child bearing made teenage mothers to be labelled as a bad influence and therefore, must not attend school because they are now adults (Shaningwa; 2007). When talking about the causes of teenage pregnancy for teenage mothers delivered in her clinic in Diepkloof, Sister Yedwa in Mkhwanazi (2006) identified amongst others ‘proving womanhood’ as a major cause. This confirms that teenage motherhood was considered as a passport to womanhood and every woman would strive to be one.

The researcher believes that there are more sorrows than joys in being a teenage mother. That teenage motherhood will give a girl recognition or status of some kind is a myth, which is only rectified at a point of no return (after being a teenage mother). The comments given by a number of respondents in different studies (herein above) clearly indicate that teenage motherhood is far from granting teenage mothers the expectations they hoped for, the only thing that awaits them are ridicules and frustrations on their way to and from schools. Therefore, this study advocates that girls must be informed as early as possible of the hardships of being a teenage mother.

2.5.4 Schooling Demands

One of the challenges that teenage mothers face is balancing the two responsibilities (that of being a learner and being a parent at the same time). This is evident when teenage mothers are unable to do or finish their homework or prepare for the next day’s test or task. Teenage

mothers have a problem in striking a balance between schooling and motherhood (Kaufman et al, 2001). The teenage mother respondents in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2007:7&9) explained,

“Being a mother and schooling is hard. When sometimes I want to do school work I don’t have time..., so it is hard to find time and have the energy”.

“Because my baby is crying all the time she doesn’t want to go to anybody. I don’t have time to do my homework”.

“Due to having a baby at home ... I don’t have time to do most of the school work”.

The lack of time to do school work was also alluded to by Shaningwa (2007:45) where a teenage mother respondent in her study related, “I have many responsibilities and I find it difficult to cope. Because of this I am punished for my incomplete homework”.

Chigona and Chetty (2007:7) confirm the hardship of balancing school work and taking care of the baby by one teenage mother respondent when she said,

“Sometimes you need to be a student, sometimes a mother and to balance the two is a bit hard. But mothering takes much of you , it is really difficult just to break away from my child.”

The findings in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2007) also indicate that teenage mothers did not have enough time to complete their homework and to study at home, because when they return from school, their relatives, who take care of the children, want to be free of the child care chores. The babies also want the attention of their mothers when they return from school. The teenage mother respondent in the study by Shaningwa (2007:64-65) confirmed the above, “There is no way a mother can be free at home compared to those who do not have children”.

The lack of time to study at home becomes hard when there is a shortage of accommodation at home. One teenage mother respondent in Chigona and Chetty (2007:10) indicated the problem as follows,

“There are a number of us in my family but we all live in just one room so it is hard for me to do my homework at night but during the day I am also busy with the household work.”

Teenage mothers cannot really get down studying and most of them are not ready for the tests or exams, and these in turn lead to poor performance and ridicule by educators in front of other learners.

Lowenthal and Lowenthal (1997) assert that mastering developmental tasks of adolescence and becoming a parent at the same time is especially demanding. These two tasks can easily conflict with each other, meaning that a teenage mother often will compromise one role or fail at both. Adolescent parenthood can be described as an “off time” in the transition to adulthood. By becoming parents, teenagers disrupt the expected sequence of first finishing school, second finding employment, next marrying, and last having children.

According to Arlington Public school (2004), managing to care for the infant and devoting adequate time to do school work is a great challenge for teenage parents. Hofferth et al (2001) assert that teenage motherhood and caring or rearing children consumes time and energy that could otherwise be spent on schooling, work and leisure time activities. A teenage mother respondent in Mengo (2010) confirmed that it was difficult to be both a student and parent at the same time. Teenage mothers face a strong battle when rearing their children as well as fulfilling their roles as students. Shaningwa (2007) elicits that although teenage mothers have problems, they are not as absent as they are thought to be, but their commitment is reflected in their inability to honour afternoon lessons and extra study time scheduled beyond normal teaching hours. Teenage mothers fail to honour such, because they cannot afford to pay baby sitters or care givers and other people, who are prepared to look after babies, beyond the normal school time as the latter wanted to be child free after school.

From the above it is clear that teenage mothers experience difficulties in paying attention to their studies satisfactorily and caring for the baby at the same time.

2.5.5 Policy Demands

According to South African Schools Act (SASA) 84 of 1996, Section 3(1), every parent must ensure that their children under the age of 15 attend school and the Constitution of South Africa in Section 29(1), states that everyone has a right to basic education and may not be discriminated because of race, pregnancy, age and so on, but there are some schools, which do not allow pregnant and parenting learners to attend classes (Ministry of Education, 2000).

It is no longer common to bar teenage mothers from continuing with their education but those, who go back to school after the birth of their babies, are not warmly welcomed. Some pregnant and teenage mothers, who go to school, are expelled because they are seen as a symbol of immorality and thus set a bad and negative example and influence to the other (non-parenting) children (Ross & Sawhile, 1995) as cited in Mohase (2006). In the study conducted by Dlamini et al (2005:7), once students became pregnant they were expected to leave school. One teenage mother respondent said, “(I was) ordered to pack and leave for good”, and added, “No you usually do not go (back) to school (you) rather change schools.”

According to Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez (1997) some schools do not allow pregnant girls and young mothers to attend classes. The expulsion of teenage mothers from schools negatively affects the expectations and future of both mother and baby. Teenage mothers reportedly would have liked to finish school and would have liked their children to have a good education, but they have reportedly lost faith in their own abilities to complete their education and find good jobs,

“I wish could finish school, I would like to go to college and have a profession I doubt myself now I don’t think I will be able to finish.” (Ritcher & Mlambo, 2005: 57).

That pregnant and parenting learners are thrown out of school and not well-treated is also evident in the study by Dlamini et al (2005:7), “they (the teachers) throw pregnant girls out of school, and despise them. They scold you and expel you... (and you must) leave for good”, said a teenage mother.

Everybody has a right to basic education and schools may not legally discriminate against or exclude students, because of pregnancy and parenthood, but many continue to do so informally. It is improper to deny teenage mothers to continue schooling when they are ready to do so. In the year 2000 the Gender Commission on Gender Equity reported to the SA Ministry of Education that they received a number of complaints from teenage mother learners concerning the manner, in which their schools had treated them. The teenage mothers complained that their schools had not allowed them to attend classes because they were mothers (Ministry of Education, 2000).

Most schools expel pregnant and parenting learners even though the policy does not allow it. This is usually due to pressure they receive from the community. The community fears that

teenage mothers will contaminate the other learners and force the school to act against the policy. In the event where the school stick to the policy, the community find ways of intimidating teenage mothers on their way to and from school as a way of preventing them to attend (Chigona and Chetty, 2008). The fact that teenage mothers ‘contaminate’ other non-parenting learners leads to the alienation and rejection of those teenage mothers, who exercise their educational right by returning to school. Adolescent mothers are described as “poor students”, or “incapable students”; they are also portrayed as “failures, bad girls, who behaved uncontrollably, irresponsibly and immorally” (Pillow, 2004), no wonder most parents tell their children to stay away from them.

Pillow (2004) maintains that obtaining an education is no longer a right to teenage mothers but something that these girls owe the society if they are not to be welfare dependant and a burden to the tax payers. They are determined to complete schooling for the sake of their babies.

To achieve what is advocated by Pillow (2004), schools must outgrow the culture of barring teenage mothers from attending classes if they are ready to do so. Teenage mothers must be given a chance to reshape and mend their lives and those of their children if they still believe in themselves.

2.5.6 Lack of Support from School

Teenage mothers, who return to school after the birth of their children, experience intimidation and marginalization and lack of support from by educators. According to Chigona and Chetty (2008) teenage mothers did not receive support from their educators, for example when a learner has missed lessons due to infant related problems; teachers are not willing to go through the lesson. The Life Orientation (LO) educator in the above study had the following to say in that regard,

“If it means missing out lessons, the teacher will only tell her to consult her friends about what they have been learning when she was absent and if she got questions she may ask the teacher but not that the teacher would go through the whole material again... so they really miss a lot because they don’t even start from the beginning ... and most teachers do not really feel sorry for a teenage mother when she misses lessons because she was with her

baby, because she is facing the consequences of her own behaviour.”
(2008:269).

The stigma attached to teenage motherhood influences educators to have a negative attitude towards teenage mothers. The negative attitude and lack of support by educators towards teenage mothers was evident in the same study wherein another educator respondent explained,

“She could come back and say, sorry, I was with my baby in Red Cross hospital so I couldn’t come to school, and so I would not say alright then my baby this we did this last week, no! no! ... it’s her own business all I say to her is, listen we have done a lot the past week when you were not here, so ask other learners what we have done and try to do your best ... nothing is put in place.” (2008:269).

As already indicated, the attitude of educators or school heads have a great influence on the attitude of learners. Teenage mothers have nowhere to submit their concerns, because they have been told before to stay away from boys or not to fall pregnant for that matter. The lack of support on teenage mothers by educators was evident in the comment of the school head when he answered, “Yeah, other pupils do mock them but they cannot complain to this office”. It is clear that the principal’s office is a “no go area” for teenage mothers when they have problems in that regard.

According to Olivier (2000) some teachers consider the teenage mother’s situation as a private matter that does not concern them and as a result they do not want to put any effort in helping teenage mothers where they lag behind while attending to their babies. The educator in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2007) confirmed that a teenage mother’s situation is a private matter and none of his concern when he indicated that when pregnant or parenting girls are dozing during class, he just ignores her and continues with the lesson.

Teenage mothers’ respondents in the study by Dlamini et al (2003) confirmed what educators in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2007) related with regard to support. Educators are not prepared to help teenage mothers bridge the gap between learning and motherhood; learners have to find ways of coping on their own, “You cannot ask them anything, they will not help you”. Educators are not willing to help teenage mothers even in cases where they are capable, because of the perception held by the community that any kind of service given to pregnant

and parenting students is condoning their immoral behaviour and bringing sexual matters to the attention of other adolescents (Burdell, 1995).

When teenage mothers are not welcomed by educators at school, learning becomes difficult for them and they end up leaving school due to the pressure they receive. They feel devastated, frightened, lonely, humiliated, frustrated and unhappy. The way teachers mock and ridicule teenage mothers in front of other learners, when they partially completed or failed to complete some of the school work makes teenage mothers to be uncomfortable, “Teachers are nagging all the time, sometimes you feel like you have got the whole world on your shoulders” relayed a teenage mother respondent in Chigona and Chetty (2007:9). Ritcher and Mlambo (2005) also confirm that teenage mothers are faced with a lot of mockery and intimidation by educators.

Teenage mothers envisaged problems in achieving educational qualifications because they were no longer accepted by their peers or by their school teachers and they had the extra burden of caring for their babies. The fact that teenage mothers are assumed to be poor, immoral and failures in life make their peers to disassociate themselves with teenage mothers in fear of contamination and to be misled (Mohase, 2006). A teenage mother respondent in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2007:8) says that “sometimes I feel left out but there is nothing I can do”.

In the study by Chigona and Chetty (2008:271) a teenage mother respondent said that there is gossiping and saying of unkind things about them by their peers,

“Some students would be talking to one another laughing and looking at me, but when I come close to them, they would stop talking so I know they were talking about me because I have a baby.... Sometimes I feel left out, but there is nothing I can do I just have to ignore them”.

“Sometimes it is like a fashion show when you walk down the corridors everyone is looking at you, you are really the centre of attention ... but this makes me feel out of place, but I cannot stop coming to school because I need to be educated so that I could support myself and my baby”.

These were the comments of a grade ten teenage mother.

A grade twelve teenage mother in the same study (*Ibid*:271) explained the difficulties she came across at school as a mother in this way, “Sometimes other students do tease me because I have a baby whilst at school...”

When teenage mothers quarrel with other learners they usually pick on the teenage mother’s situation as a mother. The principal in one of the sample schools in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2008:271) noted,

“When girls get into a fight like petty arguments and if one girl knows that the other has got a baby, sometimes would use that to hurt the girl... other girls would make points, remarks about that... we have already had these cases in the past”.

One of the school heads in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2007) observed that teenage mothers do not feel free when other girls are chatting, looking at them. When she tries to join them, they stop talking and so she just assumes they have been talking and laughing about her, because she has got a baby. So they are generally unhappy. According to Shaningwa (2007) educators ridicule teenage mothers in front of other learners when they give a wrong answer. A teenage mother respondent in the study by Shaningwa (2007:48) stated her case like this,

“You see the problem of teaching mothers; they do not pay attention to the presentation. You are supposed to stay at home and look after your child or even better go get married”.

This comment is a clear indication that schools are not teenage mother friendly. Teenage mothers are on a handle with care situation and must always be on alert. The lack of support was also evident in the same study (*Ibid*:45) by a teenage mother respondent after making a mistake or giving a wrong feedback, quoted an educator,

“How can a mother give an incorrect answer ... you better stay at home and bring your child to school rather than yourself”.

The above confirms that teenage mothers are always reminded of being mothers and that they make mistakes, because they are mothers, not because they are learners or most of all human being. McVeigh (2010) as cited in Mangino (2008) asserts that teenage mothers are left out of school and feel pressured not to return for fear of bullying and intimidation. Only a few schools show enough support. Teenage mothers in the study by Kosgey (2008) who suffered

from rejection, discrimination, intimidation, gossip, and were being undermined by educators and peers; responded by being withdrawn and absenting themselves from school.

An LO teacher in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2008:271) confirmed the hardships that teenage mothers face at school from peers in this way, “When the girl continues coming to school she experiences a lot of intimidation ... and prejudice from both learners and teachers”. A teenage mother respondent in Chigona and Chetty (2007:9) said, “There was one girl, who liked bothering me at school because I have a baby. I told her it’s none of her business”. Kaufman et al (2001) explains that teenage mothers fall behind at school, because they are teased by fellow students and their participation in class is not welcome, this makes learning difficult for them.

Another lack of support by educators was shown in the study by Burdell (1995), wherein he indicated that most educators believed that whatever the initial capability of a parenting school aged woman, becoming a parent has inevitably reduced her educational and vocational success. Having wasted her potential, most staff did not want to invest a great deal of effort in her. This clearly indicates that educators have lost trust in the educational success of teenage mothers. In addition, other lack of support for teenage mothers was shown by educators in the study by Shaningwa (2007) when one of them mentioned that it was not easy to teach young mothers, because they were difficult people, unpredictable and had different moods. The preconceived ideas about teenage mothers’ status made it difficult for educators to relate well to them well, because they already have been labelled.

The fact that teenage mothers are always reminded of their status results in their discomfort and affects their learning and collaboration with fellow learners. Teenage mothers no longer enjoy the freedom of association they had before pregnancy and delivery and see the child as an obstacle to their freedom and enjoyment of life, rejection and isolation by peers and educators (Mohase, 2006). In the study by Shaningwa (2007) teenage mothers did not see the school as a welcoming environment, because of the hurtful and harmful comments by both fellow learners and educators. They were no longer called by their names, but were now called “Zali” (elderly women) by their peers.

The treatment that teenage mothers received from friends, class mates and to a certain extent their educators caused them to develop a negative attitude towards school. The chances of success at school were often limited by the reception they get from the others as they would

expect to be treated with special care and delicacy, but unfortunately they receive the opposite (Ross & Sawhile, 1995) as cited in Mohase (2006).

2.5.7 Lack of Support from Parents

Teenage motherhood is often not accepted by most parents, to an extent that teenage mothers are forced to leave home, because they have caused embarrassment to the family. Sometimes parents distance themselves from teenage mothers, because they feel ashamed that the community will look down upon the family, because of their child's actions (Chigona & Chetty, 2008). Kids' Health (2011) confirms that parents are embarrassed and worried about how friends, family and neighbours will react when they find out that their daughter is a teenage mother. Parents often see the new born baby as a burden and they have to readjust the family budget in order to accommodate the newest member of the family. Parents often abandon their responsibility to teenage mothers and focus on the needs of their grandchild. In addition, parents withdraw privileges from the teenage mothers in favour of their infants' needs (Mohase, 2006).

The family often has high expectations and hopes for their child and are often shocked to learn about the pregnancy of their child and this results in a frustrated teenage girl (mother) in a family of confused adults, who do not know where to start (Mohase, 2006). The shock of parents was also confirmed by the parent respondent in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2008:272),

"I was so shocked to know that she was pregnant and embarrassed that my daughter got pregnant at such a very young age ...sometimes I do help her with the baby but sometimes because I want to take a break from the baby then I just tell her to know what to do with the baby because that is what she wanted she just have to face the consequences... she really has to learn a lesson that, that was a very bad thing to do... sometimes I do not provide her with everything she wants because I still feel bitter with what she did".

The shock and disappointment of parents was also shown in Kids Health (2011). Parents grieved, felt guilty and worried that they did not do enough to protect their children, but put very little effort in supporting them because the younger siblings might copy the act and become teenage mothers. In the study by Mohase (2006), parents viewed early child bearing as an embarrassment and they concentrated on the needs of the new baby and those of the

teenage mother's siblings and neglect the needs of the teenage mother as a way of disapproving her acts. Teenage mothers are isolated and have nobody to share the experiences or problems they encounter at school. A parent respondent in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2008:272) in replying to the question "does your daughter complain about mocking and bullying by fellow students and teachers?" answered,

"I know she does face such problems but she cannot come to me to complain anything about that because she knows I would tell her that is what she wanted she just has to face the consequences. so she keeps all that to herself ... and as a parent I cannot be going around pleading with people to stop harassing my daughter because she has a baby whilst very young ... she has already embarrassed me and I do not want people to be laughing at me all the time..."

The above clearly indicate that teenage mothers do not have enough support from parents and they have no one to share the problems they come across with at school, because they asked for it.

Parents do not make any effort to provide counselling for their mothering teenagers when they go back to school even though they know that they will come across alienation and stigmatisation by both educators and fellow students, because they do not want to publicise their situation to the community, that is that they are parents of a teenage mother (Chigona & Chetty, 2007). Parents are concerned about their image and wellbeing in the community at the expense of their daughter's (teenage mother) educational success.

Most teenage mothers come from poverty stricken homes and cannot afford to take the babies to crèche or hire a baby sitter. The financial challenge compels the parents of the teenage mother to work and therefore cannot baby sit the grandchild, but rely on relatives to do that on their behalf. In instances where none of the relatives is available, the teenage mother has to absent herself from school. One parent respondent in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2008:273) showed her lack of support mentioning,

"I look after the baby when she has to go to school... but sometimes when I have to go to work then she has to take care of the baby herself... she has to stay home looking after her child. I don't have money to send the baby to a crèche or to hire a baby sitter... actually she is ...burdening me because I

have three children to look after plus her baby...and I don't have a husband.....”.

According to Lee Smith-Battle (2011) there is a lack of consistent support for teenage mothers from their families. The fact that teenage mothers has to jump lessons in order to look after her baby is of less concern to her parents because she had a baby while still very young and has to face the consequences.

2.5.8 Lack of Support from Community

The community is one of the sources of hardships experienced by teenage mothers as they try to correct the mistakes of motherhood through education. The community can place a lot of pressure on school to expel pregnant and parenting learners even though it is against the Constitution of the country. In the event where schools do not expel pregnant and parenting learners the community find ways of mocking teenage mothers on their way to or from school as a way of preventing them to attend school. The community sees teenage mothers as girls with low morals, who behaved badly and must not go to school, because they will contaminate non-parenting learners (Chigona & Chetty, 2008). Shaningwa (2007) asserts that teenage mothers suffer from social isolation in their communities and this disrupts their personal life. This is confirmed by Chapati, Yahoo Contributor Network (2009) when he explained that teenage mothers are tagged as bad news in Nigeria as it is the case in South Africa, and they are socially ostracized. Parents warn their daughters to steer clear of that “ashewo” (prostitute) in fear that their kids will be corrupted by the immoral ways of a teenage mother. (Dlamini et al, 2003). Teenage mothers are not respected by men because Nigerians believe that teenage mothers are sexually loose, stupid and ill-bred. Many teenage mothers are not accommodated by their communities, because they are stereotyped as bad learners (Shaningwa; 2007).

Instead of supporting teenage mothers, the community sees them as not serious, careless, as well as immoral and most of all not fit to mix with non-parenting learners. Teenage mothers are treated as “the other girls” (Chigona & Chetty, 2008).

2.5.9 Lack of Professional Counselling

Because teenage girls have become mothers while still young and in school, they are stigmatized and tend to have a low self-esteem. To address this, proper counselling is required to help them deal with the challenges and judgements they may come across from peers, educators and the society at large, when they return to school. Counselling helps teenage mothers to face the reactions of their educators and fellow students without being emotionally hurt and becoming overwhelmed with the situation. When asked about counselling provided to teenage mothers as they came back to school, one school head in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2007:11) responded,

“We don’t have any counselling for these teenage mothers and at home parents are too busy to look for a counsellor. They are busy trying to stop the rumour from spreading and when the child is ready to be back (at) school they just send her to school.... so the child is expected to adjust to her new state on her own”.

That teenage mothers go back to school without counselling was confirmed by the teenage mother respondent in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2008:269),

“.....nobody offered counselling to me and even the teachers did not counsel me when I came back to school” (grade 10 teenage mother).

A grade 11 teenage mother respondent in the same study (*Ibid*:269) answered,

“There was no counselling and I don’t know anybody who could do that. No even from the community or the school”.

According to the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) policy of 2003 on managing learner pregnancy in public schools, the teenage mother must be considered to be a learner with special needs with access to counselling by professionals of Specialised Learner and Educator Support (SLES). The Education on Management Development Centre must co-ordinate the process. Despite the presence of policy on managing learner pregnancy in public schools, education personnel remain ambivalent about organising services like professional counselling for the teenage mothers. Principals seem too busy for co-ordination of the counselling of girls. The other challenge in public schools is that professional counselling is not readily available because there are very few professional counsellors to cater for the large number of teenage mothers in schools.

Some teachers expressed their lack of knowledge on how to handle teenage mothers at schools. They are expected to support and encourage teenage mothers to deal with their situation, which makes them learners with special needs, but instead most educators are not ready because they see teenage motherhood as a private issue and none of their concern. They concede that they should treat teenage mothers like any other students.

In order to succeed with schooling, teenage mothers need support from parents, professional counsellors and educators. According to Lee Smith-Battle (2011) the department of Education must provide professional assistance to teenage mothers if they are to succeed with their high school completion. One school head in the study by Chigona and Chetty (2007:11), when talking about the lack of counselling explained,

It becomes difficult for them to cope. More will not even be able to reach matric level as they drop off before this level.... like a girl who has a baby while in grade 9 or 10 or something like that (that is) unlikely that they will get through to matric level”.

Teachers need training on how to support and encourage learners if the latter are to complete schooling successfully. According to Olivier (2000) there is a need for parents and teachers to equip teenage mothers with life skills, which would enable them to handle their problems and challenges. There is a need for educators to be knowledgeable about problems that teenage mothers face so that they can help them effectively.

2.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, different views from various researchers about the challenges experienced by teenage mothers in high schools were reviewed in order to locate the problem in its proper contextual perspective. Literature reviewed helped to identify and explore the existing gaps.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the methodology and procedures utilized to conduct this study as well as the delineated area and site. In addition, data collection tools and analysis are explained, enhanced by a description of the instruments' construction. Finally, ethical considerations as well as the validity and reliability of the study are expounded.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The qualitative research approach was employed to comprehend and explore the challenges experienced by teenage mothers in secondary schools; this was gleaned from the teenage mothers. Qualitative research is a method of inquiry which aims to gather in-depth understanding of human behaviour, it investigates the why, and how question (Creswell, 2003). A qualitative approach was used because the researcher wanted to grasp the teenage mothers' experiences first hand, so the optimum way was personal involvement from within their natural setting (Bailey, 1994), unlike using a quantitative approach where you cannot make follow up questions direct to the response of the participant because it has close ended questions. Through qualitative approach the researcher produced findings beyond the immediate boundaries of the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

A case study was conducted as a basis for identifying and understanding the challenges experienced by these mothers in secondary schools (Creswell, Ebersohn, Eloff, Ferreira, Ivankova, Jansen, Nieuwenhuis, Pietersen, Plano Clark, & Van der Westhuizen, 2007). According to Thomas (2011), case studies are analyses of persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, institutions, or other systems that are studied holistically by one or more methods. Case studies provide an understanding of why the instance happened as it did, and what might become important to look at more intensively in future. A case study was used to

explore and deeply understand the experiences of teenage mothers as individuals and as group of participants and to explain and describe the current events and trends of these mothers' challenges and coping strategies.

3.2.1 Study Area and Site

The study was conducted in the secondary schools of Hlanganani South Circuit of the Vhembe District of Limpopo. Hlanganani South consists of seven high schools. Three out of these seven secondary schools were sampled because of their vicinity and the high number of teenage mothers.

3.2.2 Sampling

The study comprised of eighteen (18) participants who were purposively sampled. A purposive sampling was conducted, because participants' characteristics needed to be defined (Creswell et al, 2007), the participants were teenage mothers, aged between 13 and 19 years and were secondary school learners at Hlanganani South Circuit. Twelve (12) out of eighteen (18) sampled participants were teenage mothers and six (6) were educators. Four teenage mothers were sampled from each of the three sampled schools on basis of: (1) age (they had to be between 13 and 19 years) and (2) having been at that school at least two years prior to confinement. The necessity for this requirement was to provide performance records to use as control against the current results obtained as teenage mothers. In addition, two educators per sample school were chosen to form part of the sample on basis of that one was a subject educator for the teenage mothers, this was intended to provide performance records and other documents needed to understand the challenges of these teenage mothers. The other educator was a member of the school management team (SMT), to establish the support system available in schools to assist teenage mothers.

The Health Advisory Committee / Welfare Committee of the schools assisted the researcher to identify the chosen teenage mothers, because of their prior background knowledge and involvement with the said mothers.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

3.3.1 Description of Instruments

The study made use of two data collection methods, namely semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Semi structured interview allows both the interviewer and the person being interviewed the flexibility to probe for details or discuss issues. It allows new questions to be brought up during the interview (Taylor & Lindlof, 2002). In line with Kvale (1996), the researcher considered to make her questions short. This type of interview was used to encourage a two way communication and to make follow up questions as a way of exploring the challenges faced by teenage mothers but made sure to remain focused on the aim of the study. In order to address objectives 1 (to identify the challenges faced by teenage mothers), and 2 (suggest strategies that peers, educators and parents can employ to assist teenage mothers cope with the challenges), semi-structured interviews with teenage mothers were conducted.

The interview schedule for learners (Appendix B) wanted to:

- identify the challenges teenage mothers face at secondary schools,
- investigate the support system available at schools for teenage mothers, as well as
- the strategies that can be employed to assist teenage mothers succeed with their education.

The interview schedule for educators (Appendix C) was designed to glean information about the perception of educators towards teenage mothers in terms of:

- support,
- school attendance, and
- provision of covering up for missed tasks.

The last interview schedule for the SMT (Appendix D) was aimed at

- ascertaining the availability of support systems, as well as
- the perception of the SMT towards teenage mothers.

Document analysis was undertaken in order to further explore the challenges that teenage mothers encountered further. Document analysis involves reading lots of written material, relating to some aspects of the social world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Analysed documents included the following:

- quarterly schedule,
- continuous assessment portfolios,
- class attended registers,

- period registers,
- permission registers,
- morning study registers, afternoon registers,
- Saturday class registers, and
- winter enrichment class register.

3.3.2 Procedures

A pilot study was done to check if the interview schedule will bring the intended results before the actual interviews were conducted. With exception of the language barrier, the instrument was a success. Interviewing teenage mothers was not an easy task, because the researcher had to accompany them to their respective homes. The planned time and venue was not always suitable to teenage mothers, because they had no one to look after their babies after school. In certain instances, when the researcher accompanied them to their respective homes, a baby sitter had to be provided in order for the interview with the mother to be conducted. The other problem was the language in which questions were asked as revealed by the pilot study. Most of the respondents did not understand English well, and could therefore not answer the questions. The researcher had to explain the questions to them in their home language (Xitsonga) and translate their response to English then write them down so that they read out what the researcher wrote for audio tape purposes. The translations were not a problem because the researcher shared the home language with all the respondents. Some respondents were asked questions as prepared in the interview schedule (Appendix B) with no assistance and follow up questions were posed on certain responses to gain as much information as possible. The Interviews were recorded on an audio tape for better understanding after permission to do so was obtained from each respondent (Appendix A). Educators and SMT members were interviewed using questions in Appendix C and D respectively at their different schools on the scheduled time after postponing appointments time and again. The responses of educators were also recorded.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

3.4.1 Interviews

Data from interviews were analysed according to Tesch's method (Renata, 1990). Tesch's method is where you develop categories and themes as follows:

Step 1 Data is transcribed verbatim from the audio tape.

Step 2 Transcription is read for better comprehension.

Step 3 Ideas about possible categories are written down as these came to mind.

Step 4 Similar topics are clustered together.

Step 5 Lists of topics are abbreviated into codes.

Step 6 Codes are written next to the appropriate segment text.

Step 7 Related topics are grouped together to reduce the number of categories.

Step 8 Interrelationships between categories are identified.

Step 9 Final decision is taken on the abbreviation of categories.

Step 10 Findings from interviews are compared with those from documented analysis.

Then following this method, the researcher read and re-read the verbatim transcripts until specific codes emerged. These codes allowed the researcher to develop themes and categories. These themes and categories enabled the researcher to organise data; which gave rise to patterns and trends.

3.4.2 Document Analysis

- Quarterly schedules were used to check the quarterly performance of teenage mothers now and before they became mothers.
- Continuous assessment portfolios were used to check if teenage mothers completed all tasks needed.
- In certain instances a form was inserted in the teenage mother's portfolio instead of a task.
- Class registers were used to check how often they attended school.
- Period registers were utilised to determine if these mothers attended all lessons for the day.
- Morning study registers were scrutinised to check if they arrived at school on time.
- Afternoon study registers were used to ascertain whether teenage mothers stayed behind for study time.
- Saturday class registers were utilised to establish if these mothers availed themselves on non-school days.

- Winter enrichment programme registers were employed to confirm whether they honoured winter enrichment programmes fully.
- Permission registers were studied to ensure how often teenage mothers asked for permission to leave school premises.

3.5 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

A pilot study was done to check whether the instrument (interview schedule) would supply the required or intended results. It aspired that the study is valid; the findings of the study were honestly and truthfully reported as revealed by the respondents and the reviewed documents. The assumption was made that the same results would be obtained if the study was to be replicated.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A permission letter for conducting the study was granted to the researcher by the University of Limpopo stating the purpose of the research. The letter assisted in obtaining the necessary permission to conduct research from various sampled schools in the Hlanganani South Circuit. Consent letters (Appendix A) were given to teenage mothers (respondents) to read and sign as proof of their voluntary participation in the study. These letters had to be co-signed by their parents/guardians, if teenage mothers were still minors. Respondents were informed of their rights to withdraw from the study at any time they so wished or when they felt uncomfortable. The confidentiality of respondents was guaranteed and therefore pseudo-names were utilised to protect their identity.

3.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the research methodology employed in the study was discussed and the reasons for using it were given. The area and site where the study was conducted was clearly defined, that is Hlanganani South Circuit of the Vhembe District in Limpopo. The method of sampling used was also discussed, then the procedures of data collection, which were initiated by the description of data collection instruments as well as the ensuing procedures followed. This was followed by analysis of data, ensure the validity and reliability of the data, and lastly the ethical consideration of the respondents was considered.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter data are presented for each question asked to the teenage mother per school. Four teenage mothers were interviewed per school. Questions were divided into three main categories namely, (1) to identify the challenges that teenage mothers experience in high schools, (2) to check the support system available in schools for teenage mothers, and lastly (3) to check the structures that are in place for teenage mothers. Each category of questions has three sub-questions (a, b & c). In addition, a profile of each teenage mother is presented. The purpose is to provide some background to these respondents. Finally, the chapter presents data from interviews conducted with SMT and educators.

4.2 RESULTS FROM INTERVIEWS

4.2.1 DATA ANALYSIS OF TEENAGE MOTHERS PER QUESTION AND SCHOOL

1 (a) Do you think you are experiencing challenges as a teenage mother?

School A

Respondent 1 (Moonlight) said that she found it difficult to study and concentrate at school when her baby was sick and crying. She was very reluctant to proffer information because she lived close to a relative of the researcher.

Respondent 2 (Venus) uncomfortably indicated that she was criticised by her educators in front of other learners. She went on to say that most educators discouraged her by stating that she would not make it. She quoted one educator saying, “What are you doing here? You are wasting your time; people of your kind do not pass here”. She believed the educator would go to the extent of failing her.

Respondent 3 (Thoko) said that she had too much work. She had to attend to school matters and take care of the baby at the same time. She added that it was difficult to balance the two. Her exact words were, “You just have to give it your all, exclude yourself, exclude your life, put books aside and put everybody aside and just concentrate on your baby”.

Respondent 4 (Debra) said she lagged behind at school, because of attending to the baby. She also disclosed that she never performed well in her studies, because of the time and attention the baby needed.

School B

Respondent 1(Xihluke) complained that she was not treated the same as others because when she did not go to school, educators did not repeat what she had missed. She said: "...if I did not go to school it is not easy for them to cover me on the subject that they have done the previous day".

Respondent 2 (Pelma) also complained about the treatment she received from her educators and said she was sometimes called 'vabvana' (elderly women) in class and that made her uncomfortable and not welcome at school.

Respondent 3 (Tintswalo) was furious about the names educators used when addressing her. She said, "Sometimes I'm called names that I don't prefer and other learners laugh at me".

Respondent 4 (Penny) felt uncomfortable about the way educators ill-talked badly of teenage mothers and would not elaborate more on the subject.

School C

Respondent 1 (Tessa) stated that her challenge was that of having no specific person to look after her baby while she was at school. She looked sad as she continued, "I don't think I will make it, because I am worried about what might happen to my child while I'm at school".

Respondent 2 (Xiluva) indicated that her greatest challenge was lack of time to hang out with friends as she used to before she had a baby. One could really notice that she was not coping with motherhood, because she indicated, "I'm stuck with my baby the rest of the day. I cannot move an inch without her crying out for me".

Respondent 3 (Risiva) explained her challenge in this way, " I don't have enough time to study, because the baby always gets in the way... it is a lot of work for me because I have to take care of the baby and do my school work at the same time". It was evident from her speech that she was not enjoying her new found role (motherhood).

Respondent 4 (Vukosi) said she ignored her baby in order to focus on her studies and that it was very difficult for her. Her exact words were, "I don't have time to balance the two, because I ignore my child to study hoping that education will better my future".

(b) Do you think educators treat you teenage mother the way they treat other learners?

School A

Respondent 1 (Moonlight) related that she was treated the same as other learners, who were not mothers. When asked about the treatment she received from educators, she happily answered, “They treat me like other learners”.

Respondent 2 (Venus) was doubtful while responding, but mentioned that educators treated her well and shared ideas with her. She indicated, “There is interaction between me and my educators just like it is with other learners”.

Respondent 3 (Thoko) said that she was not treated well by her educators. She explained, “They start treating you like a grown up, whatever insult come your way you have to handle it ... when your grade drops it is also another case, because they tell you, you should not have gotten pregnant. So they don’t treat you like others”.

Respondent 4 (Debra) indicated that she was not treated the same as other learners by her educators. She was given more punishment than other learners. Her greatest worry was that she was called by her baby’s name instead of her own in order to humiliate her in front of others that made her feel uncomfortable.

School B

Respondent 1 (Xihluke) complained that she was not treated the same as others, because when she did not go to school, educators did not repeat what she missed, she said, “... if I did not go to school it is not easy for them to cover me on the subject that they had done the previous day”.

Respondent 2 (Pelma) also complained about the treatment she received from her educators and said she was sometimes called ‘vabvana’ (elderly women) in class and that made her feel uncomfortable and not welcome at school.

Respondent 3 (Tintswalo) was furious about the names educators used for her. She said, “Sometimes I’m called by names I do not prefer and other learners laugh at me.

Respondent 4 (Penny) felt uncomfortable about the way educators talked negatively about teenage mothers but could not elaborate more on the subject.

School C

Respondent 1 (Tessa) was enthusiastic and said, “They do not discriminate against me.” It seems her perception was positive about schooling and her relationship with her educators.

Respondent 2 (Xiluva) strongly exclaimed, “It does not happen like that, sometimes they treat me as a mother and not a learner. They always make sure that they bring it up to remind you that you are a mother, of course it is not all of them but 70 % remind you of that.” Xiluva was eager to expose the way educators treated her as she voiced her problem.

Respondent 3 (Risiva) was very shy to respond to the question, but ultimately answered, “They keep on saying that you are misbehaving because you are a mother, you are not fit to be here.”

Respondent 4 (Vukosi) was very protective about her educators, according to the researcher’s observation, because she was in the same class as Xiluva, but told a different story. She hesitantly explained that educators talked to her the way they spoke to other learners. It was obvious that when they regarded the issue of motherhood negatively, it touched everybody, connected to it, in one way or the other.

(c) Do you think learners treat you (teenage mother) the way they treat others?

School A

Respondent 1(Moonlight) was not treated well by her peers, who were not mothers. She related, “Some learners say they cannot eat with mothers, because you will always talk about your child”. It appeared that she had a low self-esteem, because of being a mother.

Respondent 2 (Venus) said that she received support from other learners. “They cannot talk some things which are bad [*sic.*], they love me”. It was clear from her response that she had no problem in associating with non-parenting learners/others.

Respondent 3 (Thoko) explained that other learners did things that were not acceptable to her. She explained, “Other learners look at you like a mother now... they make fun of you, mock you, and treat you like you are not welcome at school any more”. You could see the disappointment on Thoko’s face as she narrated her story.

Respondent 4 (Debra) concurred that other learners did not treat her well. In her own words she said, “They think I’m much older than them although we are of the same age... I’m just a teenage mother. They think I might influence them badly because I’m a mother”.

School B

Respondent 1 (Xihluke) was not treated well by other learners. Learners, who did not have children, did not experience the situation she was in and regarded her as different.

Respondent 2 (Pelma) was also not treated well by other learners. They went to the extent of undermining her. This was how she presented her story, “Some see me as a failure like I don’t exist anymore”. You could see the loss of hope and discouragement as she narrated her case.

Respondent 3 (Tintswalo) had no problem with her peers and was included in group discussions held by other learners. She wanted to proffer more information but the researcher did not allow her to waffle.

Respondent 4 (Penny) said she related well with others and they accepted her when they did group work. You could feel the confidence and satisfaction in her tone as she talked.

School C

Respondent 1 (Tessa) explained the comfort she received from other learners and what pleased her most was that they did not talk about the fact that she was a mother.

Respondent 2 (Xiluva) hesitantly mentioned, “It depends, others treat her well”. She continued, “Others treat me as me, but others who know me better treat me as a mother”. Seemingly she was confused about the treatment she received from other learners.

Respondent 3 (Risiva) had a problem with those learners who talked behind her back, always reminding her of the baby and laughing at her. Her response showed desperation of some kind.

Respondent 4 (Vukosi) was uncomfortable about the whole treatment she received from other learners, “Some always remind me that I’m a mother, like when I make a mistake”.

2 (a) Do you get extra lessons to catch up for the time loss while attending to infant related problems?

School A

Respondent 1 (Moonlight) confirmed that she received extra lessons from her teachers and fellow learners when she was absent from school. You could see the trust she had in her educators as she spoke.

Respondent 2 (Venus) said that her school did not want to hear anything about teenage mothers and there were no extra lessons for her if she missed a lesson. She explained it like this, “If I miss a test or a lesson, it means I will ask those who were at school by that time

more especially my friends who love me”. Her explanation was a clear indication of the lack of support she received from educators.

Respondent 3 (Thoko) said that there were no extra lessons for her. She continued and explained, “Every teacher has his own family, his own life, so concentrating on you who got pregnant while at school is apparently none of their business. You have to work hard”. This response proved that she would receive help from her educators.

Respondent 4 (Debra) indicated, “Once teachers get in class and teach, it’s over for the day”, and continued, “when you go and ask something that was taught because you were not at school due to the baby , they cannot teach again, but when you ask because you do not understand, they help you”.

School B

Respondent 1 (Xihluke) firmly responded, “not at all” when asked if there were extra lessons to help catch up for the time loss while attending to infant related problems. The researcher could tell from her response that there were no attempts/efforts made to help teenage mothers in this regard.

Respondent 2 (Pelma) explained there were no extra lessons granted to her. “I copy notes from friends and ask what was done, but teachers go forward and it is none of their business”, she complained.

Respondent 3 (Tintswalo) was delightful to tell that she did receive extra lessons when she missed something. “I ask the class mates and I go and ask the educator what they did and he gives me.” She seemed very comfortable while relating her response to show that she had no problem.

Respondent 4 (Penny) said there were no extra lessons for her and her exact words were, “I ask from my friends and copy notes”, seemingly she was concerned about her studies.

School C

Respondent 1 (Tessa) relied on friends to get information about what they learned when she did not come to school. “Educators are too busy to help”, she said.

Respondent 2 (Xiluva) concurred with Tessa that educators did not provide extra lessons. She explained educators say, “It is my business when I go home and attend to my child”. When I go back to school, they continue with their work she complained deeply.

Respondent 3 (Risiva) confirmed there were no extra lessons given to her by educators. “I ask my friends and they help me out... educators don’t care”, one could observe the anger in her face; she would have liked to reverse the situation she is in now.

Respondent 4 (Vukosi) agreed with what was said by almost all teenage mothers that they did not get assistance from educators to enable them to catch up. She said, “My absence from school is none of their business, I ask from friends and copy notes”.

(b) In case you miss a test or task, are you given an optional test to cover up the missed work?

School A

Respondent 1 (Moonlight) seemed to have no problems because she explained that she was given a test when she missed one although she was hesitant in her response. She was uncomfortable and one could think that she was afraid of voicing her innermost feelings.

Respondent 2 (Venus) said she was given an optional task to replace the missed one if the task was compulsory; “... more especially if it is for exam... because they know it is included for the Continuous Assessment Task (CASS). If not for CASS it means I will not be given”[sic.]. She was confident as she responded to show the experience she had on the matter at hand.

Respondent 3 (Thoko) was very excited when she responded and said that she was given an optional task whenever she missed one.

Respondent 4 (Debra) concurred that she was given an optional task because of CASS, “if it was not because of CASS I don’t think they will give me” [sic.].

School B

Respondent 1 (Xihluke) explained, “I’m given an optional task only if it really needs to go... if not for CASS, nothing will happen”, she complained.

Respondent 2 (Pelma) related that no optional tasks were given to her, “They give you a form to show that you missed a test and insert it in your portfolio” she murmured.

Respondent 3 (Tintswalo) said “Yes” and did not seem interested in responding any further to the question and the researcher suspected that she was hiding some information.

Respondent 4 (Penny) explicated that it depended on the teacher, “Some do give me and others do not give me, because teenage motherhood is not their problem”.

School C

Respondent 1 (Tessa) indicated that educators gave her a test to write when she missed one. She was enthusiastic to disclose more information about how much support she received from educators.

Respondent 2 (Xiluva) said the optional test depended on the teacher who taught the learning area, but not always. “I have never been in the situation like that, but others let them write”. She indicated that educators let them write immediately they came back to school during study time.

Respondent 3 (Risiva) complained, “There are no optional tasks unless the test is wanted for CASS, if not for CASS no writing”.

Respondent 4 (Vukosi) was not given an optional test to provide missing tasks, but was given a form to insert inside her portfolio as evidence of missed work. She was troubled by this lack of support by educators in her school.

(c) Do you get counselling from educators and SMT when you have problems as a teenage mother?

School A

Respondent 1 (Moonlight) said that there was no counselling at her school and she seemed surprised when the concept of counselling was explained.

Respondent 2 (Venus) indicated that her school made no attempts to provide counselling for teenage mothers, because the school did not want teenage mothers.

Respondent 3 (Thoko) explained the lack of counselling in her school in this way, “You went to get pregnant and you deal with it on your own. You just have to go through the process of carrying the baby yourself”.

Respondent 4 (Debra) confirmed that she receive counselling when the educators realised that she was struggling with her school work. She also confessed, “All the school wants is the 100% pass rate; they do counsel me so that I pull up my socks for a 100%”.

School B

Respondent 1 (Xihluke) received counselling from a teacher, who felt pity for her after realising she did not concentrate, and enquired into what the problem was. If there were no one to pity you, it meant there would not be any counselling.

Respondent 2 (Pelma) firmly said, “They will not help you; they tell you that they are very busy. Alone they won’t help you, but in groups they might help you”.

Respondent 3 (Tintswalo) never came across a problem so she did not know whether she would have had counselling or not, she answered boldly.

Respondent 4 (Penny) received no counselling and her school would not attempt to provide any, because they did not want teenage mothers.

School C

Respondent 1 (Tessa) indicated that she did receive help from her educators when she had a problem.

Respondent 2 (Xiluva) confirmed the lack of counselling in her school as explained by most respondents in other schools by answering, “No counselling”.

Respondent 3 (Risiva) also said that there was no counselling offered at her school to help teenage mothers.

Respondent 4 (Vukosi) concurred, “No counselling, you have to cope on your own”, when asked of the availability of counsellors at her school.

3 (a) In case you have a problem as a teenage mother, which structure do you think will be of assistance to you within the school?

School A

Respondent 1 (Moonlight) said that she was not aware of any structure which would be of assistance to her as a teenage mother within the school. It seemed as if she had never heard of such a programme and was never referred to any institution for help.

Respondent 2 (Venus) confirmed that she did not know of any structure within the school or a subcommittee, which would assist her as a teenage mother. She related her story this way, “There is no structure; if only I go to a teacher who loves me, there is no structure in our school, because they don’t want to talk about teenage mothers”.

Respondent 3 (Thoko) concurred regarding the lack of structures, subcommittees or referrals. She said the only help she received was to be informed to take her child to a day care centre so that she could concentrate on her studies. She could not afford a day care centre, so she ultimately received no help.

Respondent 4 (Debra) also affirmed that there was no structure or subcommittee of the Representative Council of Learners (RCL) within the school, which dealt with teenage mothers. She said RCL was, “When a person is a learner, but not a mother” and that the only time she did receive help was to be sent to the social worker or when the educators wanted the 100% pass rate.

School B

Respondent 1 (Xihluke) indicated the lack of support structures like this, “If a teacher feels pity for me is then that he might assist me, not from the structure”. The teacher who felt pity for her might refer her to other places for help. There was no subcommittee to help teenage mothers in her school.

Respondent 2 (Pelma) asserted that there were no structures or subcommittee which dealt with teenage mothers. When asked about this she replied, “No structure, they don’t like teenage mothers in our school, so no structure is put in place”.

Respondent 3 (Tintswalo) indicated the lack of support in terms of structures, subcommittee and referrals because, “They do not prefer teenage mothers in our school”.

Respondent 4 (Penny) responded unwillingly saying: “they don’t care; there is no structure in our school”. When asked about RCL subcommittee, she replied that RCL is for learners, not mothers”

School C

Respondent 1 (Tessa) indicated that she was sometimes referred to social workers, but there was no structure or committee that helped teenage mothers.

Respondent 2 (Xiluva) confirmed the lack of all support structures like this, “It is difficult for educators to connect with us”. The absence of all structures implied that there were no referrals to other institutions to receive help.

Respondent 3 (Risiva) spoke of the lack of support structures at her school, “They are not interested in teenage mothers” and therefore no referrals were made.

Respondent 4 (Vukosi) said there was no structures and no attempts to refer teenage mothers with problems were made. Her direct words were, “They don’t care about teenage mothers in our school”.

4.2.2 ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM EDUCATORS PER SCHOOL AND THEME

(a) Do you think teenage mothers are co-operative like other learners?

School A

Mnisi boldly confirmed that teenage mothers were more cooperative than other learners, “They have learned their lesson the hard way”. Mnisi saw them to be more focused and they knew what they were in school for.

School B

Mgiba said that teenage mothers were not cooperative, “Teenage mother claims to be somebody who is an adult, claims to know almost everything, compares herself with others. You cannot tell anything to her”[sic.].

School C

Baloyi complained that teenage mothers were not cooperative, “When given work, they always give excuses saying that maybe they were busy with their babies or taking someone to hospital... such things...they are engaged in other things, they are always giving excuses”. Baloyi related this with disappointment on her face.

(b) Do you think teenage mothers are committed to their academic matters?

School A

Mnisi wanted to believe that commitment was there, but was overtaken by, “...the condition they created for themselves”. He further stated that they found themselves in a situation whereby they could not attend to their academic matters fully.

School B

Mgiba affirmed that teenage mothers were not committed to their school work, because, “as a young mother you are looking for the child at home and you don’t have time to study. At home you don’t have a chance, that’s why we say the learning activity becomes second”.

School C

Baloyi also thought they were not committed. “They are not dedicating themselves to school work and I think it is because they are busy with the issue of their babies...they are at school really they want to further their studies, but they are not committed”.

School A

Mnisi explained that teenage mothers did not attend school regularly and when asked they tell you, “I was at the hospital; my mother was not at home so I have to look after the baby”. When it came to attendance it really became a problem.

School B

Mgiba affirmed that they did not come to school regularly. “If that mother is a one parent mother...like is still young of course and the child is not well, she should take the child to the clinic or hospital... that creates a slow pace in terms of attending school and progress for the learner”.

School C

Baloyi replied that they attended school but not 100%, because they were absent most of the days, having to attend to family matters like taking their babies to the clinic or collecting child support grant.

(c) Do you give teenage mothers extra lessons to cover up for missed work due to attending to infant related problems?

School A

Mnisi had no time to give extra lessons to teenage mothers. His excuse for not giving extra lessons was, “I have a pace setter to adhere to, so I have no time, no time at all”.

School B

Mgiba encouraged teenage mothers to ask what was done at school when they were not there. “I am always busy to complete the syllabus, so I do like to help but I’m tied up”, he commented.

School C

Baloyi indicated that she showed them what was done, “She must catch up on her own. My hands are tied; there is no time to go through the lesson again”.

(d) In case they miss a test or task, do you give them an optional test to cover up?

School A

Mnisi indicated his tight schedule in this way, “I am always busy. If the task is for CASS I give her a form to complete and insert it in her portfolio, there is no time to let her write.”

School B

Mgiba mentioned he liked to give optional tasks or tests, but, “there is really no time. I give her a consent form to insert inside her portfolio. There is nothing I can do.”

School C

Baloyi said that when the teenage mother came and asked for an optional test, she provided that, “but if she does not come nothing is given”.

4.2.3 ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM SMT PER THEME AND SCHOOL

(a) As managers, do you think teenage mothers should attend school? Explain

School A

Zama thought that teenage mothers should attend school, because it is their constitutional right. He continued by explaining that being a mother at an early age did not qualify someone to abstain from school. “I think they should attend school provided they have someone at home to look after the baby”, he said eagerly.

School B

Machavi mentioned that teenage mothers should attend school because it was their right. He added that even if they had a right to attend school, their schooling was accompanied by very serious challenges, such as asking permission continuously to look after the infant.

School C

Khosa said that they should not attend school, because the schools did not have facilities to cater for their needs. According to him schools offered resources aimed at a fully-fledged learner.

(b) How would you deal with teenage mothers who ask permission to attend to infant related problems?

School A

Zama explained that they were given permission to attend infant related problems, but advised to open bank accounts.

School B

Machavi mentioned teenage mothers were granted permission as they came and asked.

School C

Khosa complained that teenage mothers abstained from school on pay days and they were reluctant to apply for banking systems.

(c) As managers, how do you cater for the time lost by teenage mothers as they attend to infant related issues?

School A

Zama proffered that provision was made for teenage mother groups, encouraging educators to help them, but they were not committed to stay behind to enable them to catch up.

School B

Machavi confirmed that no provision was available to help teenage mothers, because they did not go at the same time and day, so it became difficult to help them catch up.

School C

Khosa maintained that it was not easy, teenage mothers were too busy for afternoons and Saturday classes and moreover they regarded it as a punishment on their part.

4.3 RESULTS FROM DOCUMENTS

4.3.1 Attendance Registers

An analysis of an attendance register in grade 12 for two quarters was done in school A (appendices G&H). Of the 14 girls enrolled, 3 were habitual absentees of which 2 were teenage mothers, who dropped out of school by the second quarter. An analysis of attendance register in grade 10 of school B indicated that 33 girls were enrolled during the first quarter (appendix E). Of these 12 had been absent during this quarter, and 2 girls, who happened to be teenage mothers, were habitual absentees and 1 of these teenage mothers dropped out of school before the end of the first quarter. In the second quarter the number of girls, who absented themselves from school rose to 22 (appendix F). Among the 22, 5 were teenage mothers. In addition it was noted that teenage mothers were mostly absent on Mondays. The records for school C were not accessible. The findings from the attendance registers in schools A and B confirmed the response by educators when they alluded that teenage mothers did not attend school regularly.

4.3.2 Period Registers

The analysis of period registers for most of the classes attended by the teenage mothers revealed that they often avoided lessons, more especially during days on which child support grants were paid. Another finding revealed that majority of them dodged lessons more especially on Fridays for reasons well-known to them.

4.3.3 Permission Register

The permission registers from the three schools indicated a score of teenage mothers requested permission, especially on pay days when they were supposed to go and collect

child support grants. This underwrote what the educators stated when it came to their reluctance in using the banking systems available.

4.3.4 Winter Enrichment Programme Register

Most of the teenage mothers in Hlanganani South Circuit did not honour the winter enrichment programme organized for the grade twelves by the Limpopo Education Department for 2011 academic year. Of the ten days, the average attendance for teenage mothers was four to five days. Most of them did not even turn up. When asked why they did not come to school, they replied there was no one to look after their babies.

4.3.5 Saturday Class Register

Teenage mothers were too busy with household chores on Saturdays and found it very hard to attend classes. It seemed that to the teenage mothers, these classes were a punishment as indicated by one SMT member respondent.

4.3.6 Morning Study Register

Teenage mothers were often late for the morning study, because they had too many responsibilities to handle in the morning before coming to school. A paramount reason for the delays was waiting for arrival of the person, who had to take care of the baby.

4.3.7 Afternoon Study Register

The teenage mothers often avoided afternoon study to look after their babies, because those who looked after the baby during normal school hours wanted to be free of the baby. Teenage mothers regarded afternoon studies as a punishment or a burden on their side, because they had more infant related duties awaiting them.

4.3.8 Quarterly Schedules

The results for the two quarters revealed that most teenage mothers did not do well in their studies and this was attributed to their habitual absenteeism due to infant related problems. The drop in performance had been observed in all sampled schools.

4.3.9 Continuous Assessment Tasks (CASS)

Most of the required CASS tasks were not found in the portfolios of the teenage mothers, because they missed them. Instead of a task, one found a form revealing the reason or non-completion. This confirmed what was related by both teenage mother and educator respondents that nothing was given to replace the missed out work and that no support was given to teenage mothers by educators.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The data presented here revealed one trend, which is that the schooling of teenage mothers was characterized by many challenges or hardships. These included amongst others:

- lack of time to study,
- lack of support structures to help them cope with schooling,
- lack of support from educators and peers, evident through the negative attitude by them towards teenage mothers, and
- lack of support from parents and the community at large.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the aim and objectives of the study as outlined in chapter one are repeated, followed by the discussion of the key findings identified from interviews. The chapter also compares the findings of this study with that of others, and then looks at the implications of the study to the relevant structures, methodological limitations will be acknowledged and finally a concluding paragraph will follow.

5.2 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study was to explore the challenges experienced by teenage mothers in Hlanganani South Circuit in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province in South Africa. The objectives of the study were:

- To identify the challenges of teenage mothers in secondary schools, and
- To suggest strategies that peers, educators and parents can employ to assist teenage mothers cope with the challenges they face.

5.3 KEY FINDINGS

The key findings of the study were that teenage mothers in secondary schools experience the following challenges:

- (a) Inability to strike a balance between schooling and teenage motherhood;
- (b) Negative attitude by educators;
- (c) Negative attitude from peers;
- (d) Lack of counselling and support from school;
- (e) Lack of support structures; and
- (f) Lack of collaboration between schools and social welfare services.

The identified challenges are elaborated in more details hereunder:

5.3.1 Inability to Strike a Balance between Schooling and Teenage Motherhood

Of 12 respondents, 11 indicated that they faced the challenge of taking care of the babies and attending school at the same time, because of the lack of a specific person to look after the baby while they were at school or to take the baby to the clinic/hospital when the baby was ill. The other challenge was the lack of a person to care for the baby after school, so that they could have time to complete school work. This challenge apparently caused teenage mothers to underperform in their studies. Only one respondent (Tintswalo) in school B confirmed she had no problem in balancing the two roles, because of the full support she received from her family. Her exact words were, “I don’t experience a challenge, because I have a full support from my parents” [*sic.*].

5.3.2 Negative Attitude by Educators towards Teenage Mothers

Thoko and Debra from school A plus all the teenage mother respondents from school B as well as Xiluva and Risiva From school C (8 in total) indicated that they received negative treatment from their educators. They were always reminded of being mothers, they were called ‘vabvana’ (elderly women) and this made them feel inferior and not welcome at school. Tintswalo from school B relate, “Sometimes I’m called by names that I don’t prefer and other learners laugh at me” [*sic.*]. They were often insulted in front of other learners if they gave wrong answers or if they did not write some tasks. The negative attitude was also shown by the lack of extra lessons for those teenage mothers, who were absent from school due to infant related problems. The interview with educators also confirmed what was said by teenage mothers that there was nothing put in place for teenage mothers, who missed certain tasks. Four teenage mothers (Moonlight and Venus from school A; Vukosi and Tessa from school C) indicated that they received the same treatment from educators as non-parenting learners.

5.3.3 Negative Attitude of Peers

Moonlight, Thoko and Debra from school A; Xihluke and Pelma from school B; and Vukosi from school C (6 in total) indicated that other learners did not treat them well. They saw them as failures and regarded them as a negative influence and did not want to associate with them. The other learners even called them by their babies' names instead of their own names and that made them feel uncomfortably old before their time. Debra narrated her story this way,

“They think I’m far much older than them although we are of the same age...I’m just a teenage mother. They think I might influence them badly because I’m a mother”
[sic].

However, 4 teenage mothers revealed that other learners treated them well and associated with them, to the extent that they welcomed their ideas in group discussions.

5.3.4 Lack of Counselling and Support for Teenage Mothers

In total 10 teenage mother respondents (all four from school A; Pelma, Tintswalo and Penny from school B; and Xiluva, Risiva and Vukosi from school C) related that there was no counselling given to them when they had problems. Conversely, 2 teenage mother respondents (Tessa from school C and Xihluke from school B) confirmed they received assistance when they had problems so that they would be able to perform better. The only thing, which forced educators in assisting them was that the school endeavoured to obtain a 100% pass rate and not because they were helped as teenage mothers. The lack of support was also evident when the educators alluded that they did not give extra lessons to teenage mothers when they were absent from school. The excuse they gave for not giving extra lessons is that they had pace setters to adhere to and syllabi to complete. Mnisi, an educator from school A, mentioned “I have a pace setter to adhere to, so I have no time, no time at all” [sic]. The fact that they inserted a declaration form in the learners' portfolio for CASS is a clear indication of the lack of support for teenage mothers. Teenage mother respondents confirmed what the educators explicated with regard to them being given forms to complete as evidence for missing tasks. Pelma concurred, “They give you a form to show that you missed a test and inserted it in your portfolio” [sic].

5.3.5 Lack of Support Structures for Teenage Mothers

All twelve teenage mother respondents said that there were no structures available in their schools that help teenage mothers when they have problems. All teenage mother respondents showed that there were no sub committees within the RCL, which deals with teenage mothers. The reason behind the lack of support structures is that schools do not want teenage mothers and any help provided to them might look like they encourage learners to go out and have babies. Pelma and Tintswalo from school B respectively indicated: “No structure, they don’t like teenage mothers in our school, so no structure is put in place”. “They do not prefer teenage mothers in our school”, [sic].

5.3.6 Lack of Collaboration between Schools and Social Welfare Services

Regarding collaboration between schools and social welfare services, 3 teenage mother respondents (Venus and Debra from school A; & Tessa from school C) indicated that they were sometimes referred, but the assistance was not intended to help them as teenage mothers, but for obtaining a 100% pass. The rest of the teenage mother respondents (9 in total) indicated that their school did not care about teenage mothers.

5.4 COMPARISON WITH OTHER STUDIES

The study revealed a number of findings, amongst others are: (a) Lack of support, (b) Difficulty in balancing motherhood and schooling and (c) lack of professional counselling.

5.4.1 Lack of Support

This study determined that teenage mothers did not enjoy the necessary support from educators, peers and parents. This confirmed what Dlamini et al (2003) revealed that teenage mothers in Swaziland lacked support from individuals, and institutions, which caused them to be lonely, frustrated, fearful, and unhappy. Ritcher and Mlambo (2005) also reached the same conclusion; especially they did not receive the necessary support from their educators. Similar results were obtained from the study by Chigona and Chetty (2007), which elicited that teenage mothers in Cape Town received insufficient support emotionally and physically,

which led to most of them quitting school or not succeeding with schooling. The lack of support was also evident in the study by Shaningwa (2007), which revealed that teenage mothers in Namibia did not receive support from their educators as most of them were ridiculed in front of other learners. In addition, the study by Chigona and Chetty (2008) elicited that teenage mothers failed to succeed with schooling because they lacked support to avoid the numerous disruptions to their school attendance. Teenage mothers did not receive the support from their educators because educators considered the teenage mother's situation to be a private matter.

5.4.2 Difficulty in Balancing Motherhood and Schooling

The current study also explicated that teenage mothers had a problem coping with the two responsibilities that is being a mother and a learner at the same time. This confirmed the findings by Mohase (2006) that teenage mothers experienced problems having to take care of the baby and complete school work or going school at the same time, more especially so when the baby was ill. In addition, Theron and Dunn (2006) explained that adolescent child bearing was disruptive to the educational process of girls and many teenage mothers left school and never returned. The difficulty in balancing the two responsibilities was also confirmed in the study by Zondo (2006) wherein teenage mothers in eThekweni experienced difficulty in balancing their educational responsibilities and taking care of the baby. Shaningwa (2007:64) confirmed the hardship of taking care of the baby and schooling by quoting one teenage mother respondent saying, "If my child is sick, I have to be there and look after her". Mengo (2009) stated that even if teenage mothers were supported financially, they still found it difficult to balance their education and the obligations that came with being a parent. The findings in this study also confirmed the explication in the study by Lowenthal and Lowenthal (1997) as well as Kaufman et al (2001) that teenage mothers experienced problems of striking a balance between schooling and motherhood.

5.4.3 Lack of Professional Counselling

A lack of professional counselling for teenage mothers as they go back to school to further their studies is another finding of this research. Lee Smith-Battle (2001) confirmed that teenage mothers needed professional help in order to succeed with their schooling. This

source's findings also concurs with that of Olivier (2000) that there is a professional need to equip learners with life skills to help them deal with their challenges. The findings by Chigona and Chetty (2007) was that teenage mothers in their study reported to have had no professional counselling before or after returning to school, the same applied to the respondents in Chigona and Chetty (2008).

Despite the findings in this study, other researchers arrived at contrary views. Hofferth et al (2001) believe that the influence of early child bearing on schooling was weaker than previously believed. Close to half of their sample of girls, who became pregnant while at school returned to school after giving birth if they had the financial means. Mkhwanazi (2006) is concerned with the idea of teenage motherhood resulting in disruption of schooling, placing a teenage mother at the risk of unemployment was (and is still) not a given in South Africa. Zeck et al (2007) is of the opinion that adolescent mothers continued with their training and obtained a higher level of education after two and half to five years following delivery. They further alluded that the number of teenage mothers leaving their children with their own parents rose, which was an indication of an improvement in the education level and in finding jobs. That was made possible by the availability of the parents of the teenage mother. Shaningwa (2007) confirmed that teenage mothers coped with schooling when there was a female adult whom they trusted to take care of their babies while at school. In addition, she explains that teenage mothers, who were in boarding schools succeeded mostly because they were not always in contact with their babies.

Tillman (2008) maintained that with the provision of flexible schedule for teenage mothers, they succeeded with schooling. Hill (2011) confirmed that teenage mothers who got extra lessons at their convenience were able to succeed with schooling, the addition of special support from dedicated educators in special schools made teenage mothers to excel.

5.5 EXPLANATIONS FOR THE DIFFERENCES

Most of the studies which proffer contrary results are international and were conducted in developed countries, where the level of education is high and women are highly empowered, no wonder parents ensured that their daughters (teenage mothers) went back to school while they took care of their grandchildren. Although the studies indicate that teenage mothers

coped with schooling (that is they were able to balance the two roles), this was made possible by the presence of an adult female. If teenage mother respondents in this study received support from peers, educators and parents, their difficulties would be over and they would be able to cope with their schooling, like those in the studies conducted by researchers with contrary views referred to above. The study by Mkhwanazi (2006) was conducted in South Africa, but yielded different findings, because of context. This research was conducted in the rural areas at Hlanganani South Circuit in Limpopo Province, while the former was conducted in Gauteng; seemingly parents in this source's area of study were more supportive, because of a better standard of living and improved educational level.

5.6 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study should be of great significance to the following stake holders; policy makers, teenagers, teachers and parents.

5.6.1 Policy Makers

The study should assist policy makers as they grapple with the problem of pregnant and parenting learners in schools. It should also alert them that policies relating to pregnant and parenting learners are not correctly implemented in schools. Therefore, they should ensure that such policies are adhered to in schools by conducting workshops or in-service training for educators to prepare them in turning schools into a 'teenage mother friendly zone'.

5.6.2 Teenagers

This study should alert teenagers who are not yet mothers to the difficulty of going to school and rearing a child, so that they might realise in advance that teenage motherhood is 'a no go area'. This study should also sensitise them to take pre-cautionary measures before they engaged themselves in sexual matters. Therefore, this study strives to renew and revive the hopes of teenage mothers, because they will know that they have a right to learn and that should diminish their low self-esteem and consequently they should believe in their potential and succeed with schooling. Through this study teenage mothers should be able to report any mockery, teasing or marginalization, by both peers and educators, to departmental officials.

5.6.3 Teachers

This study should be an eye opener to those educators, who insult and embarrass teenage mothers, because they will realise that these teenage mothers also belong at school. The study should assist educators to accommodate teenage mothers and support them when and where necessary. Educators should be flexible and willing to attend in-service training on how best to support teenage mothers in schools and also to refer them to other structures, such as clinics, social services etcetera, to obtain help.

5.6.4 Parents

The importance of supporting teenage mothers should be brought to the attention of the parents through this study. Parents will be all out to help their children (teenage mothers) cope with the challenges that come with being a mother while still very young and at school. They should also provide counselling to their children before going back to schools after birth.

5.6.5 Community

The community should strive to make sex education a community issue. In addition, teenage mothers could be supported by all stake holders in the community and schooling should become much easier for them.

5.7 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

One of the limitations of using an interview as a qualitative method of gathering information is that the respondents are not free to express their innermost feelings, because the respondents are face to face with the interviewer. The respondent might be fearful of victimization or how an interviewer might perceive them after the interview. To overcome this shortfall of hiding or withdrawing information, follow up and probing questions were asked after respondents gave their initial responses. In certain instances questions were rephrased to ensure that the respondent did in fact state her view on the question. The other challenge pertaining to the interview was that teenage mothers did not honour the

appointments we made. Instead of conducting interviews at schools, the researcher had to accompany them to their respective homes and provide a baby sitter for the time of the interview.

The other challenge was that interviews with the respondents were recorded on an audio tape. In certain instances, the researcher found the episode was not recorded and then had to rearrange the interview with the respondent and apologize for the incident. The transcribed data sometimes made no sense because no direct explanations were given; this was overcome by analysing the whole transcript and then generalising the responses based on how many respondents proffered the same answer.

5.8 CONCLUSION

The chapter highlighted the aim and objectives of the study as outlined in chapter one, then the key findings from interviews were discussed, and compared with those of other researchers. Explanations were then supplied for the contrary views as well as the significance of the study to all stakeholders and finally, the methodological limitations were highlighted.

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Appendix A

(Consent form for teenage mothers)

The challenges experienced by teenage mothers in secondary schools: The case of Hlanganani South circuit.

The purpose of this study is to understand the challenges faced by teenage mothers in secondary schools. Data will be collected using interviews. The respondents may ask questions before or after participating in the interview. The respondents' confidentiality and anonymity will be respected. Participants have a right to withdraw from the study any time they feel like. There are no known risks associated with the study.

Signature (Parent)

Date

Signature (Teenage Mother)

Date

Appendix B

Questions to Learners

1. What are the challenges that teenage mothers experience in high schools?	a) Do you think you are experiencing challenges as a teenage mother? Explain b) Do you think educators treat you (teenage mother) the way they treat other learners? State your case c) Do you think learners treat you (teenage mother) the way they treat others?
2. What support is available at schools for teenage mothers?	a) Do you get extra lessons to catch up for the time loss while attending to infant related problems?
	b) In case you miss a test or task, are you given an optional test to cover up the missed up work?
	c) Do you get counselling from educators and SMT when you have a problems as a teenage mother?
3. What structures are put in place to help teenage mothers (learners with special needs)?	a) In case you have a problem as a teenage mother, which structure do you think will be of assistance to you within the school?
	b) Do educators sometimes refer you (teenage mother) to institutions outside the school to get assistance in case of problems?
	c) Is there a subcommittee within the RCL, which deals with teenage pregnancy and mothers?

Appendix C

Questions to Educators

What are the perceptions of educators in relation to teenage mothers	a) Do you think teenage mothers are co-operative like other learners?
	b) Do you think teenage mothers are committed to their academic matters?
	c) Do they attend school like non-parenting learners?
	d) Do you give teenage mothers extra lessons to cover up for missed work due to attending to infant related problems?
	e) In case they miss a test or task, do you give them an optional task to cover up?

Appendix D

Questions to School Management Team (SMT)

What are the perceptions of the SMT towards teenage mothers?	a) As managers, do you think teenage mothers should attend school? explain
	b) How would you deal with teenage mothers who ask permission to attend to infant related problems? (Child support grant, baby clinic and ill health)
	c) As managers, how do you cater for the time lost by teenage mothers as they attend infant related issues?

APPENDIX E

SCHOOL B ATTENDANCE REGISTER QUARTER 1 2011											GRADE 10																					
GIRLS																																
	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9	D10	D11	D12	D13	D14	D15	D16	D17	D18	D19	D20	D21	D22	D23	D24	D25	D26	D27	D28	D29	D30	D31	D32
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KEY : a - Absent																																
L - Learner																																
* - Teenage mother																																
D - Day																																

APPENDIX F

SCHOOL B ATTENDANCE REGISTER QUARTER 2 2011 GRADE 10																																							
GIRLS	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9	D10	D11	D12	D13	D14	D15	D16	D17	D18	D19	D20	D21	D22	D23	D24	D25	D26	D27	D28	D29	D30	D31	D32	D33	D34	D35	D36	D37	D38	D39
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L32*														a	a					a	a	a								a	a								
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	KEY	:	a -	Absent																																			
			L -	Learner																																			
			* -	Teenage mother																																			
			D -	Day																																			
			xx -	Withdrawn																																			

APPENDIX G

SCHOOL A FIRST QUARTER SCHEDULE GRADE 12 2010 (GIRLS)												
Names	Gender	AGE	TSO	ENG	LO	MATHS	LIFESC/ECO	GEO/BUS	PHY/ACC	TOT	%	RESULTS
L1	F	17	67	61	88	60	44	55	43	435	62.14286	C
L2	F	17	75	60	92	50	56	72	45	467	66.71429	C
L3*	F	18	47	42	40	22	19	31	13	232	33.14286	NC
L4	F	17	50	55	78	31	45	63	33	372	53.14286	C
L5	F	18	80	80	92	23	68	64	39	464	66.28571	C
L6	F	17	42	46	45	18	29	25	23	245	35	NC
L7	F	17	54	58	88	53	45	62	53	430	61.42857	C
L8	F	18	83	76	94	65	63	77	60	536	76.57143	C
L9*	F	19	43	49	47	18	25	29	22	252	36	NC
L10	F	17	72	59	80	58	50	58	45	439	62.71429	C
L11	F	17	70	70	88	56	49	66	57	473	67.57143	C
L12	F	17	66	64	84	54	53	45	39	422	60.28571	C
L13	F	17	84	66	90	46	65	73	49	490	70	C
L14*	F	19	36	42	44	12	30	27	17	227	32.42857	NC
KEY												
L - Learner												
TSO - Xitsong												
ENG - English												
LO - Life Orientation												
MATHS Mathematics												
LIFESC- Life sciences												
ECO - Economics												
GEO - Geography												
BUS - Business studies												
PHY - Physical Science												
ACC - Accounting												
* - Teenage mother												
C - Competent												
NC_ Not Competent												

APPENDIX H

[illegible]

APPENDIX I

SCHOOL B FIRST QUARTER SCHEDULE GRADE 10 2010 (GIRLS)												
Names	Gender	AGE	TSO	ENG	LO	MATHS	LIFESC/EC	GEO/BUS	PHY/ACC	TOT	%	RESULTS
L1	F	14	67	61	88	60	44	55	43	432	61.71429	C
L2	F	15	65	66	92	50	56	72	45	461	65.85714	C
L3	F	16	55	42	40	22	19	31	13	238	34	NC
L4	F	16	55	55	78	31	45	63	33	376	53.71429	C
L5	F	15	67	77	92	23	68	64	39	445	63.57143	C
L6*	F	17	42	46	45	18	29	25	23	245	35	NC
L7	F	15	54	58	88	53	45	62	53	428	61.14286	C
L8	F	16	89	76	94	65	63	77	60	540	77.14286	C
L9	F	16	43	49	47	18	25	29	22	249	35.57143	NC
L10*	F	18	43	37	45	8	23	33	26	233	33.28571	NC
L11*	F	17	40	40	44	13	33	23	25	235	33.57143	NC
L12	F	15	66	64	84	54	53	45	39	420	60	C
L13	F	16	84	66	90	46	65	73	49	489	69.85714	C
L14	F	15	70	42	44	23	30	27	17	268	38.28571	NC
L15	F	15	56	37	88	33	66	55	22	372	53.14286	C
L16	F	14	67	65	78	43	80	54	34	435	62.14286	C
L17*	F	17	41	43	42	34	27	22	16	242	34.57143	NC
L18	F	14	78	66	84	38	46	43	33	402	57.42857	C
L19	F	16	65	59	80	56	56	26	43	401	57.28571	C
L20*	F	17	50	41	40	39	20	29	16	252	36	NC
L21	F	14	68	55	76	37	59	66	56	431	61.57143	C
L22	F	15	56	58	66	17	51	53	57	373	53.28571	C
L23*	F	17	44	34	45	22	29	28	17	236	33.71429	NC
L24	F	15	66	67	64	31	33	58	45	379	54.14286	C
L25	F	16	67	62	68	38	45	57	34	387	55.28571	C
L26	F	15	65	54	55	36	49	46	44	364	52	C
L27*	F	17	46	33	43	13	33	27	19	231	33	NC
L28	F	15	56	44	68	34	43	44	53	357	51	C
L29	F	15	55	76	90	67	49	67	41	460	65.71429	C
L30	F	14	65	67	80	48	55	55	45	429	61.28571	C
L31	F	15	68	55	78	62	59	64	65	466	66.57143	C
L32*	F	17	43	41	40	21	30	29	19	240	34.28571	NC
L33	F	14	78	65	80	40	79	77	66	499	71.28571	C
Key												
* : Teenage mother												
L : Learner												
NC : Not Competent												
TSO : Xitsonga												
LO : Life Orientation												
MATHS: Mathematics												
LIFESC : Life Sciences												
ECO : Economics												
ENG : English												
GEO : Geography												
BUS : Business Studies												
PHY : Physical Sciences												
ACC : Accounting												

APPENDIX J

SCHOOL B SECOND QUARTER SCHEDULE GRADE 10 2010 (GIRLS)												
Names	Gender	AGE	TSO	ENG	LO	MATHS	LIFESC/EC	GEO/BUS	PHY/ACC	TOT	%	RESULTS
L1	F	14	68	65	85	56	78	74	66	506	72.28571	C
L2	F	15	84	78	94	51	65	75	47	509	72.71429	C
L3	F	16	67	56	45	29	60	56	40	369	52.71429	NC
L4	F	16	72	68	82	29	45	56	42	410	58.57143	C
L5	F	15	70	80	92	31	70	65	44	467	66.71429	C
L6*	F	17	52	44	40	23	31	24	22	253	36.14286	NC
L7	F	15	56	60	90	56	50	65	50	442	63.14286	C
L8	F	16	92	86	94	61	63	75	60	547	78.14286	C
L9	F	16	48	50	56	20	24	28	19	261	37.28571	NC
L10*	F	18	47	37	60	12	30	29	28	261	37.28571	NC
L11*	F	17	45	43	50	5	33	23	25	241	34.42857	NC
L12	F	15	66	64	84	54	53	45	39	420	60	C
L13	F	16	84	67	94	54	72	70	51	508	72.57143	C
L14	F	15	66	54	54	19	33	29	18	288	41.14286	NC
L15	F	15	56	40	88	33	66	55	22	375	53.57143	C
L16	F	14	72	66	80	43	74	76	40	465	66.42857	C
L17*	F	17	54	43	42	34	27	22	16	255	36.42857	NC
L18	F	14	78	66	84	38	46	43	33	402	57.42857	C
L19	F	16	65	59	80	56	56	26	43	401	57.28571	C
L20*	F	17	50	41	40	39	20	29	16	252	36	NC
L21	F	14	68	55	76	37	59	66	56	431	61.57143	C
L22	F	15	56	58	66	17	51	53	57	373	53.28571	C
L23*	F	17	49	39	46	29	23	25	24	252	36	NC
L24	F	15	66	67	64	31	33	58	45	379	54.14286	C
L25	F	16	67	62	68	38	45	57	34	387	55.28571	C
L26	F	15	65	54	55	36	49	46	44	364	52	C
L27*	F	17	54	40	50	22	38	29	21	271	38.71429	NC
L28	F	15	44	62	66	36	43	47	45	358	51.14286	C
L29	F	15	55	76	90	67	49	67	41	460	65.71429	C
L30	F	14	65	67	80	48	55	55	45	429	61.28571	C
L31	F	15	68	55	78	62	59	64	65	466	66.57143	C
L32*	F	17	44	42	49	28	26	29	19	254	36.28571	NC
L33	F	14	78	65	80	40	79	77	66	499	71.28571	C
Key :												
* : Teenage mother												
L : Learner												
NC : Not Competent ACC : Accounting												
TSO : Xitsonga												
ENG : English												
LO : Life Orientation												
MATHS : Mathematics												
LIFESC : Life Sciences												
ECO : Economics												
GEO : Geography												
BUS : Business Studies												
PHY : Physical Sciences												

APPENDIX K

SCHOOL A FIRST QUARTER SCHEDULE GRADE 12 2010 (GIRLS)													
Names	Gender	AGE	TSO	ENG	LO	MATHS	LIFESC/ECO	GEO/BUS	PHY/ACC	TOT	%	RESULTS	
L1	F	17	67	61	88	60	44	55	43	435	62.14286	C	
L2	F	17	75	60	92	50	56	72	45	467	66.71429	C	
L3*	F	18	47	42	40	22	19	31	13	232	33.14286	NC	
L4	F	17	50	55	78	31	45	63	33	372	53.14286	C	
L5	F	18	80	80	92	23	68	64	39	464	66.28571	C	
L6	F	17	42	46	45	18	29	25	23	245	35	NC	
L7	F	17	54	58	88	53	45	62	53	430	61.42857	C	
L8	F	18	83	76	94	65	63	77	60	536	76.57143	C	
L9*	F	19	43	49	47	18	25	29	22	252	36	NC	
L10	F	17	72	59	80	58	50	58	45	439	62.71429	C	
L11	F	17	70	70	88	56	49	66	57	473	67.57143	C	
L12	F	17	66	64	84	54	53	45	39	422	60.28571	C	
L13	F	17	84	66	90	46	65	73	49	490	70	C	
L14*	F	19	36	42	44	12	30	27	17	227	32.42857	NC	
KEY													
L	-	Learner											
TSO	-	Xitsong											
ENG	-	English											
LO	-	Life Orientation											
MATHS	-	Mathematics											
LIFESC	-	Life sciences											
ECO	-	Economics											
GEO	-	Geography											
BUS	-	Business studies											
PHY	-	Physical Science											
ACC	-	Accounting											
*	-	Teenage mother											
C	-	Competent											
NC	-	Not Competent											

APPENDIX L

[illegible]

APPENDIX M

PERMISSION LETTER FROM SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

Turfloop Campus

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Educational Studies



Private Bag X1106
Sovenga, 0727
South Africa

Tel: (015) 268 3149/292
Fax: (015) 268 2965/286
Email: dollyr@ul.ac.za

27 May 2011

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that **CHAUKE HELEN**, student Number 8900298, is doing her Master's degree with the University of Limpopo. Her topic is: **Challenges experienced by teenage mothers in secondary school**. She requests for the permission to conduct her research at your school.

I hope that you will give her your maximum cooperation.

Thank you


.....
Prof. M.J Themane
(Supervisor)

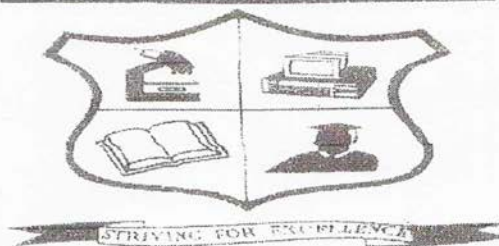
APPENDIX N

PERMISSION LETTERS FROM SCHOOLS ON WHICH RESEARCH WAS CONDUCTED

APPENDIX N

PERMISSION LETTERS FROM SCHOOLS ON WHICH RESEARCH WAS CONDUCTED

YINOWANE PHEBUNGWANI H. SCHOOL



YINOWANE PHEBUNGWANI
HIGH SCHOOL
Private Bag X5006
VONGANI
0930

Inquiries: Baloyi N.L

1 June 2011

Cell No: 0731635363

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to confirm that Chauke Helen student No : 8900298 was granted permission to conduct her Research project at this School, as she proved to us that she is a registered student of the University of Limpopo .

We thank you .

Yours faithfully

Baloyi N.L (Hod)

T. (A)

APPENDIX N

PERMISSION LETTERS FROM SCHOOLS ON WHICH RESEARCH WAS
CONDUCTED



MAHLORI SECONDARY SCHOOL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

LIMPOPO PROVINCE

HLANGANANI SOUTH CIRCUIT

VHEMBE DISTRICT

ENQ: RINGANI GP
0722384817

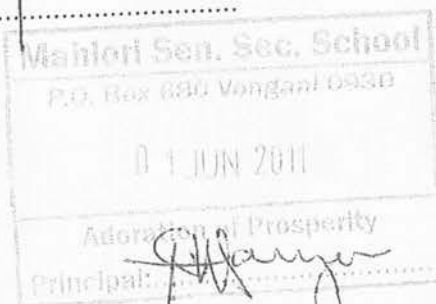
BOX 680
VONGANI
0930
01 06 2011

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that CHAUKE HELEN, student no 8900298 was granted permission by
SMT to conduct research for her studies at our school.

Hoping that this will serve the purpose

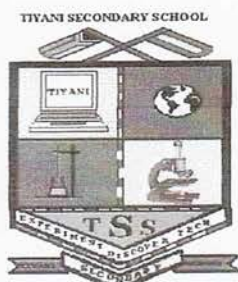
Yours Faithfully
Ringani GP (Principal)



93 (B)

APPENDIX N

PERMISSION LETTERS FROM SCHOOLS ON WHICH RESEARCH WAS
CONDUCTED



TIYANI SECONDARY SCHOOL

VHEMBE DISTRICT

HLANGANANI SOUTH CIRCUIT

P.O. BOX 721

VONGANI

0930

Enquiries : **RIKHOTSO N. H**
Mobile phone : **072 229 9688**
School Telefax. No. : **015 873 0014**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**CONFIRMATION OF RESEARCH CONDUCTED AT THE
SCHOOL**

1. The matter alluded to here-in-above seriously refers.
2. I, herewith wish to confirm that Mrs Chauke H, of student NO. 8900298 were allowed to conduct research at our school.
3. She brought in a letter asking for permission to do research on the 1st of June 2011.
4. During her stay with us the school did not experience any problem with her.
5. I therefore, without any shadow of doubt, strongly recommend Mrs Chauke H to be given any assistance at your institution. I hope that the institution which assists her will have an interest in a future researcher.

I hope that you will find this in good order

Yours truly


RIKHOTSO N. H (SCHOOL MANAGER)



APPENDIX O

EDITOR'S CONFIRMATION LETTER

SOLI DEO GLORIA EDITOR'S CONFIRMATION LETTER TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I hereby state that I have edited the document:

THE CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY TEENAGE MOTHERS IN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS: THE CASE OF HLANGANANI SOUTH CIRCUIT

by
CHAUKE HELEN

DISSERTATION

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION
in
CURRICULUM STUDIES

in the

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
(School of Education)
at the
UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

SUPERVISOR: Prof. MJ Themane

Disclaimer

At time of submission to student, language editing and technical care was attended to as requested by student and supervisor. Any corrections and technical care required after submission is the sole responsibility of the student.

Kind Regards

Dr J.P. Sammons
D.Litt.et Phil (University of Johannesburg)

SOLI DEO GLORIA
Language Editing

Cell: +61406014560
Email: sdgproofed@gmail.com
DATE: 10 February 2012

